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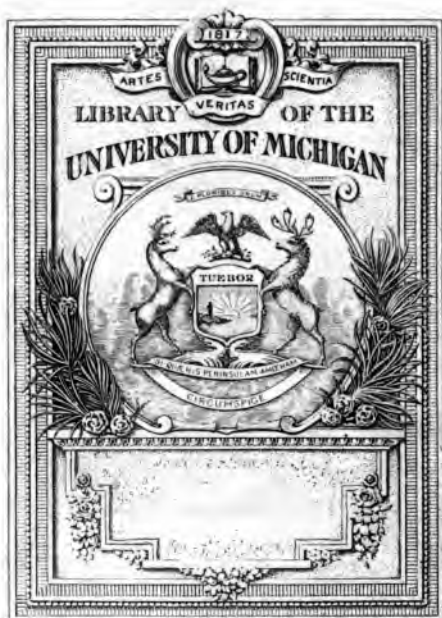
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LECTURES

ON

COLONIZATION AND COLONIES.

1888 13

DELIVERED

BEFORE THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN

1839, 1840, AND 1841.

BY

HERMAN MERIVALE, A.M.

PROFESSOR OF POLITICAL ECONOMY.

VOLUME THE FIRST.

LONDON:

LONGMAN, ORME, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS,  
PATERNOSTER-ROW.

1841.





## INTRODUCTION.

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THE Lectures now presented to the public form part of a course delivered at the University of Oxford in the years 1839, 1840, and 1841. Another part will shortly appear as a second volume. They are published in compliance with the terms of the foundation of the Chair of Political Economy.

I have endeavoured to embrace in these Lectures a vast subject,—far too vast, indeed, for any thing more than the slightest and most superficial investigation. My objects were, first, to convey information on a very popular and interesting topic, on which information in a condensed shape is not easily attainable: next, to lead the minds of my hearers to the consideration of some elementary principles in Political Economy which are illustrated by the phenomena of colonization and the growth of colonies: lastly, to call their attention also to the principles of the art of colonization, if I may so term it, particularly to the ingenious speculations of late years respecting the most profitable mode of applying capital and labour in the foundation and improvement of settlements;—speculations which have not only assumed something of scientific dignity, but have been partially subjected to the test of experiment in some of our Australian possessions.

Perhaps a reference to these objects will explain the order in which the subject is treated, which may at first sight appear a little anomalous. I have commenced, where in strict analytical arrangement I ought to have ended, by a brief sketch of the history of modern colonies, chiefly in respect of the progress of wealth and commerce; taking care to touch in this rapid review on those phenomena which might appear to afford the most striking illustration of principles. And I may here mention that throughout these Lectures the term Colony is used in the ancient and proper sense, and not in that which has passed from official into general usage, in which it comprehends every species of foreign possession,—military stations, such as Gibraltar and Malta; conquered districts, possessed by native inhabitants with a very slight admixture of the conquerors, such as Ceylon; mercantile emporia, such as the factories of European powers on the coast of Africa. By a Colony I understand a territory of which the soil is entirely or principally owned by settlers from the mother country.

The remainder falls naturally into two portions. In the first of these, the economical effects of colonization on the wealth and industry of the mother country are treated of, as far as my narrow limits have permitted. I have confined my observations on this head to three particulars:—the effect of emigration, real or supposed, on the proportion between the supply and demand of labour at home; the effects of the export of capital which accompanies emigration on national wealth; and the character of the commerce which takes place between colonies and the mother country, with especial reference to the history and

results of that series of protections and restrictions which constitutes our so-called colonial system.

In the last division of these lectures, I have considered the progress of wealth and society in colonies themselves; the natural laws by which it is governed, the artificial regulations by which it may be promoted and guided. The first topic of interest to which I have adverted is that scarcity of available labour which is so severely felt in infant colonies; which has attracted so much attention of late years among practical economists, and has been attempted to be remedied by one of the most novel and remarkable experiments of our times,—the “South Australian” scheme of colonization; now put into practice more or less rigorously in all our possessions in that quarter of the world. But before entering on that much controverted topic, I have digressed so far as to advert to the history of the principal methods by which European colonists have hitherto endeavoured to obviate this scarcity; namely, the employment of subjugated native labourers, as in Spanish America, of slaves, and of convicts, — subjects which necessarily lead to the incidental discussion of some of the complicated problems which now agitate at once the minds of economists, philanthropists, and politicians.

The consideration of the scheme of Mr. Wakefield and his disciples for supplying the same deficiency, is necessarily connected with an investigation of the principles which have regulated, and those which ought to regulate the disposal of public lands; that important function of colonial authority which, in the view of Lord Durham, had been the “most full of good and evil consequences” in the government of

that portion of the Empire which he was sent to administer. And in order to complete the consideration of those measures which are preliminary to the establishment of young commonwealths, I have treated at some length of the policy of colonial governments towards the native races inhabiting their dominions.

To trace the progress of colonies in their second or adult stage, and up to the period when their independence, either virtual or actual, commences (for a community may continue under the central authority long after it has advanced, in an economical point of view, from the rank of a colony, properly so called, into that of a state), I have found almost too wide a field of inquiry for the limits of a course of lectures. The third part of these lectures is, however, concluded with some observations on the growth of capital in new countries, and on taxation, considered with reference to it; on their civil and ecclesiastical government, and the chief political and social features of their condition. The volume now published comprises the first and second of these three divisions, and the commencement of the last.

No period in the history of our transmarine empire, except perhaps that which immediately preceded the American Revolution, has been so fertile in lessons and examples as that in which we live. Reviewing the portion of time which has elapsed since the delivery of these lectures began, I find that the country has witnessed in the interval the great experiment of the union of the two Canadas; the first results of the full emancipation of the slaves in our colonies; the trial of the new “principles of coloni-

zation" in South Australia, and the sudden prosperity and singular fortunes of that province ; the subsequent adoption of the experiment of disposing of public lands by sale at comparatively high prices, and applying the proceeds in great proportion to the conveyance of emigrants, throughout a large part of our dependencies ; the establishment of a new board of functionaries for the management of this particular branch of the public service ; the beginning of two new settlements, with the most sanguine anticipation of success, at Port Philip and in New Zealand ; the abolition of the assignment of convicts, with its important, although probably temporary, effects on the economical state of the convict colonies. And lastly — even while I am now writing — a reform of the colonial system of commerce, more extensive than the boldest statesman had hitherto ventured to propose, is under debate in the legislature, and seems to be the measure on which the conflicting parties of the day have taken issue. The mere enumeration of these events, each of them pregnant with important consequences, will show how much of political experience has been crowded into the occurrences of two short years. Nor must I neglect to mention the impulse which has been given to the course of events, in itself rapid and urgent, by the new views and new energy which have presided in the colonial department of our government. It will be found, when its operations are impartially reviewed, that never has the same degree of attention been paid to the details of colonization ; — never, at any former period, has government been so willing to take the initiative in extensive operations, to form and ex-

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press comprehensive views, to take measure not only of the immediate claims of the passing time, but of the essential wants and interests of young communities. Never has there been shown so great a disposition to resist that temptation to let things alone which is the besetting danger of our colonial administration, harassed as it is by the multiplied claims of a business almost too great for any single office, and dreading to impose on itself a feather's right in addition to the necessary burden of every day's pressing requirements. I do not speak here of the great political measures respecting the affairs of our foreign empire which have been agitated in the legislature, and have excited a general attention in the country, — it is no part of my province to comment on them, — but of those minor details which concern the social prospects of infant communities, too young to have their interests weighed and discussed in the stress of parties. Whatever judgment the nation may pass hereafter on the general policy of the present administration, it is certain that the future citizens of Australia and Polynesia, the descendants of the British adventurers now so widely scattering themselves over the surface of the earth, will look back to its era as that in which the first essays were made — as yet essays only — towards guiding colonial enterprise by a systematic and definite course of policy.

These important occurrences have rendered it necessary to revise, and to a certain extent to recast a few of my lectures ; nor do they, as now published, exactly correspond in number or arrangement with those delivered. But I have endeavoured, as far as

possible, to avoid making any substantial alterations, from a conviction, that the terms of the foundation would be evaded by publishing any thing materially different from that which was uttered. The same reason has induced me to retain much which I should have omitted, if I had been composing an independent treatise, and subject to no such responsibility.

The statistical tables collected in the notes and appendixes have been compiled, where the authorities are not expressly noticed, from the best sources within my reach, and chiefly from official reports. And I have to acknowledge the kindness of several friends in the Board of Trade, and in the Colonial Land and Emigration Office, in affording me access to more recent information than has yet been made public, with respect to the movement of the import and export trade of our principal colonies, and the amount of emigration.





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## **PART I.**

**HISTORICAL ACCOUNT OF THE PROGRESS OF THE  
COLONIES OF MODERN EUROPE.**

divia, and the other heroes of that period, passed over the surface of the earth as whirlwinds, clearing the way for other adventurers by the very devastation they created, but leaving no memorial of themselves except in the awe and wonder of their cotemporaries, which have coloured the traditions respecting them. After their era came that of the peaceful colonist, whose slow labours founded and consolidated the dominion of which they had only traced out the landmarks.

A few of the principal dates of the Conquest will illustrate the rapidity of its execution. In 1519 Cortes landed with a few adventurers at Vera Cruz : in 1521 he became master of Mexico : Peru, Quito, Chili, had been overrun by the year 1535 : in 1532, Terra Firma was occupied ; and New Granada in 1536. In seventeen years a handful of Spaniards had spread themselves over territories more than equal in extent to the whole of Europe, and inhabited in part by numerous nations under regular governments. The subsequent extension of Spanish colonization to the North, over the regions adjacent to Mexico, afterwards called the "Internal Provinces," and to the South, over La Plata and Paraguay, was a work of greater time and more difficulty.

But although the labour of conquest was thus rapid, that of settlement was slow and interrupted. In the middle of the sixteenth century it was asserted (perhaps on no very sufficient grounds), that not more than 18,000 Spaniards were established all over the continent of America. This number may be erroneous : but it must be remembered, that they came at first rather to garrison than to colonize ; that few women accompanied the earlier adventurers ; that they obtained their subsistence and their wealth not by their own labour, but by that of the Indians ; and that wars,

debaucheries, and the effects of climate, caused a rapid mortality among them.

Their earliest enterprises, as is well known, were almost wholly directed to the acquisition of the precious metals. The supplies which they first discovered in Hispaniola were soon exhausted, although not before the greater portion of the native inhabitants had perished in the labour of working them. It is one of the most singular of those apparently casual circumstances which have influenced the fortunes of the human race, that these slight sources of wealth, the insular mines, should have been disposed as a kind of lure to tempt the Spaniards on to the occupation of the neighbouring continent; and that just when these were exhausted, the enormous riches of the latter should have been laid open. "Fortune," in the language of A. Smith, "did upon this what she did upon few other occasions: she realised, in some measure, the extravagant hopes of her votaries; and in the discovery and conquest of Mexico and Peru, she presented them with something not unlike the profusion of the precious metals which they sought for."

The miseries which that discovery entailed upon the defenceless inhabitants of America, have been too often and too vividly described to need any recapitulation. Divided as slaves among the "conquerors," to each of whom whole districts were allotted for the exercise of his cupidity, they were driven in herds to the mines, forced to supply by their numbers the total want of skill and of capital under which their masters laboured, and their lives were wasted with the same reckless profusion with which the colonist of modern times wastes the powers and wealth of nature which are placed at *his* disposal—the wild animals of the forest, and the resources of a virgin soil. And in the districts in



which mines did not exist, although the situation of the Indians was less severe, and the depopulation less enormous, their treatment was no less iniquitous and disgraceful.

These excesses were partially checked by a series of legal provisions, beginning, indeed, as early as the year 1542. The Indians, at first slaves, were next subjected to the system of repartimientos, that is, divided among masters, who had a property in their labour, not in their persons : and, lastly, they were distributed in "encomiendas," paying to the "encomendero" or owner of the district a tribute, or produce-rent, in return for protection — a system in its turn abandoned, or considerably modified, in later times. It is truly said by Heeren, that "no European government did "so much for the Aborigines as the Spanish;" and although most writers have coupled with the admission of this fact the general assertion, that the good laws established by the mother country were set absolutely at nought by the rapacity of the colonists, yet the state of comparative ease and prosperity in which the Indians lived at the time when the recent revolutions commenced, most distinctly contradicts this position. It was long, no doubt, before the evil principles of the original conquerors were eradicated ; but a course of wise and moderate legislation nearly succeeded, in most of the provinces, in removing them at last. The great principle of the Spanish law respecting the Indians, was that of preserving them in a state of *perpetual minority*. They were rendered incapable of legal contracts and liabilities, except to a very limited extent. They were under the protection of the king, to whom they paid the capitation tax ; and of the clergy, to whom they paid the dues of the church : and minor justice was administered to them frequently by officials

of their own complexion. Such a system accords little with European notions of civil freedom : it is, perhaps, inconsistent with a fair development of industry, and of the mental faculties ; yet, on the whole, it is difficult to say, whether a better has yet been devised to preserve the personal liberty of the inferior races, and at the same time prevent collision between them and the superior. At all events it must be admitted, that had the legislation of Spain in other respects been as well conceived as that respecting the Indians, the loss of her Western empire would have been an unmerited visitation.

The state of society in the American colonies early assumed the character of an oligarchy. The pure Spanish families were few in number. They were often possessed of considerable wealth, either from their agricultural possessions, or from successful mining operations. But this wealth was of little avail to procure the comforts or luxuries of life. The owner of whole provinces could command only a modicum of surplus agricultural produce, for which, under the commercial system which prevailed, it was often impossible to obtain a market. The miner was more certain of a vent for his commodities, which formed the great mass of the regular exports of the colonies to the mother country. But his profits were from their nature most precarious and delusive ; for one who was enriched, numbers were ruined. In fact, notwithstanding the gorgeous colours with which the imaginations of the other European nations invested the jealously guarded El Dorado of the Spaniards, there were only two periods during which it may reasonably be supposed, that the wealth of the community was rapidly augmenting, in consequence of the increased production of the precious metals, — the first half of the seventeenth

century in Peru (the splendid age of Potosi), and the last half of the eighteenth in Mexico. At other times it may, perhaps, be pretty safely conjectured, that the funds invested in mining experiments were barely replaced, on the whole, by the return ; and that the whole increase of the capital of the community took place in agriculture.

It was this oligarchical character of society, together with the system of restrictions under which they lived, which produced the habit of the Spanish Creoles, especially in the mining districts, to congregate in cities, contrary to what has already been observed of the general spirit of modern colonists. Mutual defence against the multitude of subject Indians, was probably their object in early times. The tendency was increased by the indolent habits of families, whose subsistence was amply provided for by the labour of others, and which had little temptation to accumulate wealth and embark in profitable undertakings, hemmed in and oppressed as they were by the jealous policy of their rulers. In this way the government may be said to have collected the people together artificially in towns, as Captain Basil Hall expresses it ; but to suppose, with that author, that this was done by the state with deliberate intention, is perhaps to attribute to it too far-fetched a policy. The bulk of the population of these cities was made up of the mixed classes — those which grew up from the intermixture of Spaniards with Indians, and of both with the Negroes, who, in the course of time were imported into the continent, although never in very large numbers, when the slavery of the Indians was abolished. The Indians themselves, where sufficiently numerous, tilled the soil or wrought the mines. Each capital city, for the most part, stood in a rich and well cultivated district, but of limited extent, and

separated from the rest of the world by deserts of ice and snow ; by ravines, compared with which the depth of our Alpine valleys is insignificant ; by provinces of forest, or by hot and unhealthy plains. Thus each community dwelt apart, divided at once by natural and artificial barriers ; and generation after generation remained as utterly ignorant and reckless of the fortunes of the neighbouring settlements, as of those of the most distant countries of Europe.

The commercial policy of the Spanish government towards its continental colonies has been often described, and exhibits the most perfect monument of systematic tyranny, of which any age has furnished an example. The traffic of the mother country was confined, at first, to the single port of Seville ; afterwards to that of Cadiz. It was under the control of a board, termed the "Casa de Contratacion," which was subjected to the direct government of the crown. Two squadrons were annually dispatched. The "galleons," usually about twelve in number, to the port of Carthage in South America ; the "flota," of about fifteen, to Vera Cruz in Mexico. It was the great amount of business, relatively speaking, carried on by those few vessels, and the sudden activity communicated to commerce during the brief transactions which supplied the wants of a whole continent—all the trade of the empire collected as it were in one focus,—which dazzled the eyes of European observers, and occasioned the most fallacious ideas respecting the amount of annual exchanges actually made. The Spaniards, it is observed by A. Smith and by Robertson, while they tried almost every other nostrum of colonial policy, never adopted the system of confining their trade to an exclusive company. But, as Heeren remarks in answer, the monopoly of a few rich houses at Seville was naturally produced by these restrictions,

and a virtual company, though not so designated by law, was in fact instituted ; and Humboldt bears witness that a similar monopoly was practically established in Mexico by a few commercial houses, which bought up and retailed the imports.\* Thus, while the Americans had to buy the goods of the mother country, or those which the importers had purchased from abroad, at a price far exceeding their values, the benefit of this monopoly was reserved to a small and privileged class alone. But, in fact, the trade of the flota and galleons was so utterly inadequate to supply the wants of so vast a population, that, until the operations of the smuggler began to redress the evil, it was almost destitute of European commodities.

In connection with the restrictions on foreign trade, not only the settlement but the visits of all foreigners were prohibited more strictly than in China or Japan. The punishment of the strangers who were found in the colonies was at first death—in later times, perpetual imprisonment. Spaniards themselves might not visit them without royal license, and this was usually only granted for a limited time, unless in the case of those who went out to hold government offices. Even as late as the middle of the eighteenth century, the landing of a Boston vessel on the desolate island of Juan Fernandez to refit, and the appearance of an English whaler in the South Sea, were occurrences of sufficient importance to require a long report from the viceroy of Peru, and the reprimand or cashiering of several officers.

Internal commerce between the provinces, to complete the picture, was prohibited almost as effectually as foreign trade.

With all these severe regulations in repression of

\* *Nouv. Espagne*, iv. 288.

the freedom of commerce, it is remarkable that some other restrictions, which have been commonly adopted by other European nations in their colonies, never prevailed in those of Spain, and were esteemed inconsistent with the principles of the government. In this, as in other instances, there is a singular contrast between its liberal maxims in some points and its timid and miserable policy in others. Thus the "kings of Spain (to use the words of Humboldt) in "taking the title of kings of the Indies, considered "these distant possessions rather as integral parts of "their monarchy, as provinces depending on the crown "of Castile, than as colonies in the sense attached to "that word, since the sixteenth century, by the commercial nations of Europe." The corollary of this doctrine was, according to the same writer, that the people were not systematically prohibited, as they have been in most colonies, from manufacturing for themselves. The mother country supplied them exclusively with European manufactured commodities, but they were not compelled to take those commodities in preference to the produce of their own industry. Thus sugar refining was permitted in Spanish America; and considerable manufactures of the coarser goods existed at Quito and elsewhere, although sometimes discouraged by European governors. But Humboldt has omitted to explain, how this principle was consistent with the arbitrary edicts which prevented the Americans from raising various articles of raw produce grown in the mother country. The culture of saffron, hemp, tobacco, olives, and vineyards, was thus at different times prohibited; and even as late as 1803, when Humboldt was at Mexico, an order was dispatched from Madrid for the rooting up of all the vines in the northern dependencies of that province.

The political treatment of the Spanish colonies was, as is well known, quite in keeping with their commercial administration. To enter into details respecting it would be foreign to my present purpose. Suffice it to say, that the system of government by viceroys, captains-general, audiencias, and councils, with their various relations to each other, has been truly described as a complicated contrivance to render every part of the government a check on every other. The best governors found it impossible to carry into effect any scheme for the amelioration of society; the worst found it easy enough to enrich themselves, and aggrandise their favourites. Power was exclusively in the hands of Spaniards, and most colonial offices were sold in Madrid. "Of 170 viceroys," say the revolutionists of Buenos Ayres in their first manifesto, "who have governed the provinces of America, four only have been Americans; of 610 captains-general and governors, only fourteen." Even the very clerks of the government offices were almost exclusively European. Such a system, at least with regard to the higher offices, has been pursued by most European nations in their colonies; and is so still in our own. But it must be remembered, that society in our settlements is strictly democratic, and that it may be a necessary policy not to violate the existing equality of ranks, as it would be violated should the governors be taken from the body of the people. In Spanish America there existed an aristocracy; for there were very large estates enjoyed by American families, under a strict system of mayorazgos or entails\*: many had been raised to nobility; some decorated with titles by the crown; and it is one of the worst features of

\* These mayorazgos are represented by A. Smith and others, as a cause of the slow progress of industry; but it seems that only  $\frac{1}{15}$  of the property could be thus entailed.

the policy of Spain, that having under its hand these elements of orderly and national institutions, it systematically refused to employ them, and degraded and irritated the possessors of rank and wealth by excluding them from every public trust. It sought for security against the deep discontent of the Creoles by cultivating the spirit of mutual jealousy between them and the inferior or mixed races. The place of a man in society was made to depend on his colour, even to the minutest shades. The different degrees of departure from the white standard of purity by intermixture with Negro or Indian blood, were marked out with the utmost minuteness, not only by the usages of society, but by the laws. When there was only a sixth of Indian or Negro blood in the composition of the citizen, that is, when after one intermixture the progeny had, for two generations, married with pure whites, caste was recovered: "*Que se tengan por blancos*;" let them pass for white, was the cautious sentence of the law. On the other hand, the progeny of one of mixed race intermarrying with another in whom the mixture was darker, was termed "*salta-atras*," or retrograde. "Is it possible that you consider yourself whiter than me?" was often the question of a bare-footed Creole labourer, when he esteemed himself affronted by a grandee of Mexico. The pride of caste is a common feature of society in all slave colonies; but there it naturally arises out of the degradation in which slaves are held: in continental Spanish America slavery was very little extended, and these unhappy distinctions, not necessarily proceeding from the constitution of society, were deliberately cherished by the policy of the mother country.

The state of the church was perhaps the worst feature of all in the condition of these colonies. It was early



emancipated from the direct control of the Vatican. By the bulls of Alexander II. and Julius II. (1501 and 1508), the perception of all tithes and collation to all benefices were absolutely relinquished to the crown. But this exemption from foreign superintendence, instead of a blessing, proved the worst of all curses to the unfortunate Americans. They were thereby deprived of a protector who, from one motive or another, would frequently have stood between them and their temporal rulers, whose only object was to make the church an engine of their political system. The clergy, both regular and secular, were notoriously lazy and corrupt to a degree unknown in the mother country. The frontier missionaries, the only active class, came chiefly from Europe; those who remained in the inhabited parts were sunk in the utmost sloth and profligacy. The Inquisition, with all its appurtenances, was transferred across the Atlantic; and if its activity was not so great as in Europe, this appears to have been really owing rather to the general languor which pervaded all things in those regions of indolence, than to any superior tolerance. Education was, for the most part, sedulously discouraged. "Learn to read, write, and say your prayers," said the viceroy, Gil de Lemos, to a deputation from the collegians of Lima, who sought for some extension of their privileges, "for this is as much as any American ought to know."

The degeneracy of the Creole race under such institutions as these, and in the climate of the tropics, was rapid to an unprecedented degree. Even the courage of the Castilian disappeared; the descendants of the Conquistadores, in three or four generations, had forgotten the use of arms. The adventurers of other European countries, who came occasionally in contact with these sequestered people, found them almost as

powerless and as terrified as the Indians themselves had been at the arrival of the Spaniards. When the Buccaneers of the seventeenth century crossed the Isthmus of Darien and ravaged the coasts of the South Sea, they met with a population absolutely defenceless, which fled in herds to the churches at the first moment of alarm. And the same scenes were renewed eighty years afterwards when the expedition of Anson threatened Chili and Peru.

The kings of the house of Bourbon deserve the credit of having begun the gradual removal of those complicated fetters with which the Austrian sovereigns had bound both the commerce and the spirit of America. It should, however, rather be said, that the measures which they adopted were forced upon them by the progress of events, over which even the most absolute monarchs have no effectual control. The lightening of commercial restrictions, as usual, preceded and introduced every other improvement. This was the work of the smuggler. The contraband trade to the Spanish colonies became, in the early part of the last century, the most regular and organised system of that kind which the world has ever witnessed. The English led the way in it, and their progress was much facilitated by their obtaining, at the peace of Utrecht, what was termed the *Assiento* contract; that is, the privilege of supplying Spanish America with a limited number of Negro slaves: for the vessels licensed for this traffic were much more profitably employed in smuggling. The Dutch, French, and other nations, seized on their share of the spoil. Jamaica and St. Domingo became complete entrepôts for smuggled commodities, whence they were transported with ease to the continent; just as the Danish and Swedish islands, in later times, have served in the same capacity for Jamaica itself. Buenos Ayres

rose from an insignificant station to a considerable city, merely from being the centre of the contraband traffic between Europe and Peru. The Spaniards guarded their coasts with an expensive maritime force, while they resorted, in the interior, to the strange measure of making smuggling an offence cognisable by the Inquisition. But all such efforts were utterly fruitless to check, what Sir J. Child so aptly termed, "the force" and violence of the ordinary course of trade." The flotas and galleons sank to insignificance, and their owners were glad to make these licensed squadrons serve for introducing the contraband commodities furnished by other nations.

The war of 1737, into which Sir Robert Walpole was forced by the clamour of the English people, was neither more nor less than a war for the protection of smuggling. The Spaniards, however, saw in some degree their error, and in 1748 the system of flotas and galleons was changed for that of licensed or "register" ships, which sailed singly from Europe. These vessels opened the commercial passage round Cape Horn; and in this way a stop seems to have been put, in great measure, to the illegal trade by way of Buenos Ayres. But, as a general remedy, the change was wholly ineffectual. Smuggling continued to increase with the increasing wants of communities now more rapidly advancing in wealth; and Adam Smith, Ulloa, and Raynal, give ample information as to its manner and extent. War only made the matter worse, for the Spanish cruizers were then driven from the sea, and the trade was conveniently carried on under neutral flags; so that, as Humboldt has shown\*, the commerce of Mexico was always most flourishing in times of

\* *Nouv. Espagne*, iv. 434.

hostilities. The steps taken by the court of Spain, though in the right direction, followed very slowly the rapid increase of the evil. In 1765, the trade between the islands and the continent was thrown open; in 1774, the obstacles to internal commerce removed; and in 1778, a new and more liberal scale of duties adopted; and the trade with Spain, which had hitherto been confined first to Seville and then to Cadiz, was extended to fourteen ports of the mother country. Finally, according to Mr. Brougham, the contraband trade was almost entirely destroyed: a position of rather doubtful accuracy.\*

In the mean time, and simultaneously with these changes, the industry and social condition of the colonies had made a sudden and almost unparalleled advance. The indestructible advantages of abundant soil and vast facilities of production triumphed in the end over every obstacle which legislation could throw in their way. In 1778 their exports to Spain amounted to 74,500,000 reals; in 1788, to 804,500,000. Mexico, from the astonishing increase in the productiveness of its mines; Guatemala, Venezuela, La Plata, and Chili, from their agricultural improvement; were the provinces in which this progress was most strikingly manifested. And, by way of termination to this lecture, we will take a brief review of the general state of development at which the resources of Spanish America had arrived at the close of the last century.

There is no region, says Humboldt, in which the circumstances of society are so much regulated by climate and by the disposition of the soil as Spanish America. A slight sketch of its physical geography

\* Col. Policy, i. 445. "The dangers of separation from the parent state," he adds, "*are not to be considered*, so distant have they been rendered by wise measures of general policy!"—*Ib.* 451.

may therefore not be out of place on the present occasion. The chief peculiarities of its climate are accounted for in a remarkably simple manner by reference to the prevailing winds and the comparative elevation of the land in different parts of it. The whole theory (if such it may be termed) is beautifully developed under the head "America" in the last supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, from which I have borrowed these details.

In the map attached to that article the different shades of dark colour indicate the quantity of moisture of the climate, increasing in depth as that is greater. On this moisture, in warm countries, the cultivation of the soil almost wholly depends. The broken line represents the range of the Andes. The arrows indicate the prevailing winds. From the equator as far as lat. 30° S. or thereabouts, east winds almost continually blow; varying, indeed, several points to the north or south of east, but maintaining that general direction. These winds arrive charged with the vapours of the Atlantic on the coasts of Brazil, where these vapours are precipitated in rain. They blow, as travellers inform us, with unintermitting regularity against the current of the great river Amazons; and, in the same direction, across the plains of Brazil and the interior. In all that vast region there are no chains of mountains, scarcely any single groupe, of sufficient height to arrest them, until they arrive at the great Cordillera of the Andes along the western coast. They consequently carry rain with them (in most parts, more or less in every season of the year) as far as that range; but in somewhat diminishing quantity as they pass farther over the land. The whole of this tract, with slight exceptions, is therefore covered with luxuriant forests. The last clouds are broken against the lofty wall presented by the Andes, and fall on their summits in

occasional showers of snow and rain. The coast of the Pacific, sheltered by the Andes, scarcely receives a single drop. The wind there blows continually from or along the land ; hence the name of the sea, which in that part is always free from storms. On the coast of Peru, from near the equator to the frontier of Chili, rain never falls : cultivation is only possible here and there, on the banks of scanty streams descending from the snow of the Cordillera.

South of lat.  $30^{\circ}$ , this state of things is reversed. The prevailing winds blow from the west ; and, consequently, the high range of the Andes continuing to intercept the clouds, the western coast is covered with forests ; the whole country to the east of the mountains being bare and subject to drought. To the north of the equator somewhat different results are produced by the different structure of the continent. The trade wind blowing from the east in the Gulf of Mexico brings moisture to all the coasts of that extensive inland sea. Before reaching the isthmus of Darien from the south, the Cordilleras sink into hills of moderate size, and cease to obstruct the passage of the wind. Its fertilising vapours are consequently carried across to the Pacific, and spread southward as far as the equator, north and westward along the coast of Mexico, covering all those regions with tropical forests. But in central Mexico the Cordillera, rising again, acts as a barrier against the wind, and the table land of its summit has a somewhat arid climate. As we proceed northward, this tendency continues to predominate ; the wide plains of the "internal provinces" of Mexico are less and less visited by showers, according to their distance from the Atlantic ; and in California, as in Peru, rain never falls. North of lat.  $30^{\circ}$ , the variable western winds again prevail. From the

Gulf of Mexico, however, two currents of warm vapour appear to proceed in a northerly direction : one up the valley of the Mississippi, while the other is carried by the gulf stream along the eastern coast of the United States ; which account for the woody character of that country.

These physical details explain at once the different proportions in which the fourteen or fifteen millions of inhabitants who occupied these regions under the dominion of Spain were spread over their surface, and the varieties of social condition which prevailed among them. In the extreme northern and southern districts, the internal provinces of Mexico and the Pampas of La Plata, wide dry plains, with a temperate climate, became the abodes of a pastoral population. The tame animals of Europe multiplied amazingly in their pastures, and constituted the chief wealth of their settlers. These were principally of pure Spanish descent : the Indians were few and warlike ; and poverty rendered the importation of slaves impossible. Among them, the tendency to insolation, so common to European settlers in similar circumstances, had ample room to exert itself. The great object of every colonist was to obtain free space, and constant removal, for his flocks and herds ; as is now the case with the boors of the Cape of Good Hope. Hence unremitting warfare with the bordering Indians \*, armed and mounted like himself, rendered him as hardy and active, as savage and remorseless as they : the few cities scattered over the wilderness served not so much for purposes of trade, as for a refuge to the Spaniards when over-matched or surprised by their vigilant enemies. In this state of things civilization rapidly retrograded, and the white settlers

\* At both the extremities of the Spanish empire, in New Mexico, and in Chili and La Plata, the Indians have learnt the use of the horse.

had almost forgotten the arts and the knowledge of those from whom they were descended.

In the warm and fertile regions which possessed an easy access to the sea, such as Guatemala and Venezuela, the great wealth of the settlers consisted in the staple products of tropical climates; coffee, cotton, sugar, and cacao. Here a state of society, somewhat resembling that of our West India islands, naturally prevailed. The whites were rich in the abundant produce of their plantations; which increased greatly during the last half of the eighteenth century. Labour was chiefly performed by Negroes; by Indians, where these were numerous; and by the mixed races, which had multiplied rapidly under the indulgent government of the Spaniards, so as to form, in some of the provinces, more than half the population. The mines of these districts were few and unimportant.

But the mass of the population and wealth of the Spanish colonies was concentrated on the small table lands and lofty valleys of the great Cordillera. Here the first adventurers found the agricultural Indian nations established, exhibiting, in the middle of barbarous tribes or uninhabited deserts, the wonders of their mysterious civilization; and here the children of the conquerors took up their abode, built magnificent cities on the site of those which their fathers had destroyed, and gave to their towns and provinces the still cherished names of the mother country. Here, too, they found in reality that vast mineral wealth, of which the prospect had deluded the first adventurers. The most remarkable of these plateaux (to use a word employed by modern topographers) are those of Mexico, New Granada, Quito, and Upper Peru. These narrow spaces of table land, elevated at an enormous height above the adjoining ocean, were the only regions in the wide continent of



Spanish America in which a concentrated and numerous population was actually to be found. To the traveller, who reached one of these happy valleys after traversing hot and unhealthy forests, and crossing the regions of eternal frost which encircle them, it is no wonder that the contrast which he had witnessed heightened its attractions; and that in beholding its fertile fields, its skies almost always serene, its numerous and flourishing cities, the fruits of a temperate climate in close proximity to those of the burning equatorial regions, and the magnificent pinnacles of the Andes surrounding it, he should have been tempted to describe it as a sequestered Paradise.

By far the finest of these oases is the table land of Mexico: out of 5,000,000 people who inhabited the whole viceroyalty at the time of Humboldt's visit in 1800, full three were collected in this central region. The progress of Mexico, during the fifty or sixty years before that time, had been most surprising. Population was doubling (it is said) in about thirty years, and the tithes (which may serve as an index to the gross produce of agriculture) in about twenty-five: but manufacturing and mining wealth were increasing with at least equal rapidity. The revenue of Mexico had risen within the century from about four to twenty millions of dollars, or 4,000,000*l.* It has been said by an able, but somewhat dogmatical writer, that it is, "if not an absolute, at least a moral, impossibility that a colony should ever benefit a mother country by yielding it a permanent tribute."\* The example of Mexico is a direct authority against the position. It furnished annually, in Humboldt's time, 6,000,000 dollars over and above all expenses of government and defence. But the greater part of this surplus was again absorbed in

\* *Ency. Brit. art. COLONY.*

assisting the exchequer of other and poorer colonies, so that very little reached Spain itself. So far was Mexico advanced beyond the rest, that Humboldt estimates that two thirds of the whole currency of Spanish America was used in that province alone.

This flourishing revenue was nearly all owing either directly or indirectly to the extraordinary advance of the Mexican silver mines. These produced, at the end of the last century, 24,000,000 dollars annually; far more than all the rest of Spanish America. The writer whom I have just quoted asserts, that the dominion over a colony for the sake of precious metals can only be desirable when it has a monopoly of the supply of those metals, "by having the richest mines, and under-selling the rest of the world." The difference in the cost of production between those mines and the most barren which are anywhere wrought, becomes then a monopoly profit or rent, and a legitimate subject of taxation. This axiom seems somewhat loosely expressed, because it is clear that in any mining country, whether or not its mines were the richest in the world, the difference between the richest and the poorest which could be wrought with a profit, would form a species of rent, and be taxable in the same manner. But the condition of Mexico for a few years of the eighteenth century, certainly affords an instance of the great revenue which may thus be realized. Its mines were more productive than those of any other region, not so much from superior fertility, as because they were easily accessible, and the supply of labour practically unlimited; whereas in the great Peruvian mines, as we shall presently see, the obstacles to working with a profit were far greater. Consequently Mexico could, in fact, undersell Peru, or any other country, in the market of the

world, and this monopoly afforded an abundant source of rent and imposts.

The latter were not heavy. It is an error to assert, as many have done, that the productiveness of the American mines was checked by the exactions of government. The crown held no mines of its own. They were all the property of adventurers or landlords. The whole of the duties levied on silver amounted before the revolution to about  $11\frac{1}{2}$  per cent.; a tax which those of Mexico at least were well able to bear. It is an equally erroneous supposition, that mining in America was unfavourable to the progress of agriculture. This notion appears to have arisen merely from the fact that many of the most celebrated American mines were situated in districts naturally so barren as to be incapable of profitable cultivation. Those of Mexico were not thus unfavourably circumstanced; and the mining wealth of that country served, as was naturally to be expected, as a stimulus to agricultural industry. The district near Guanaxuato, the neighbourhood of the richest of all the mines, reminded Humboldt by its appearance of the luxuriant plains of Lombardy. So in Chili \*, streams abounding in gold, it is said, run through the richest corn-fields, and the farmer and miner hold converse on their banks.

The enormous mass of surplus wealth thus created was lodged in a very few hands. Humboldt has preserved some data which, if reported with any degree of accuracy, will show the great amount of monopoly profits or rent, which may be obtained under so rare a combination of circumstances as that of great fertility of soil with an ample supply of labour. According to that writer, the return to seed in the cultivation of wheat in Mexico might be estimated at 24 to 1: in

\* Caldcleugh's Travels.

France, at 6 to 1. But the labourer in the temperate country of Mexico received wages amounting to about 30 sous French per day: the French labourer received about 35; but as corn was somewhat dearer in France than Mexico, the real wages of the two were about equal. Supposing, therefore, that the labour of the two were equally effective, the Mexican labourer, for the same amount of wages, would produce four times as much as the Frenchman: in other words, rent and profit together would be more than four times as high in Mexico as in France: and rating the effectiveness of the American's labour at only one half that of the Frenchman, rent and profit in the former country would still be more than double what they were in the latter.

The wealth of the higher classes in Mexico was, accordingly, very great. According to Humboldt, there were fortunes of 15 or 20,000*l.* sterling per annum, in Cuba; the highest in Venezuela might be 6 or 7000*l.*; in Lima, few amounted to 3 or 4000*l.* These sums sink to nothing in comparison with the riches of the Mexican grandees.

"In New Spain," says the same writer, "there are individuals who possess no mines, and yet whose annual income amounts to a million of francs (40,000*l.*), The family of the Count de la Valenciana, for example, possesses alone, on the ridge of the Cordillera, estates of the value of more than 25 millions (6,000,000*l.*). without including the mine of Valenciana near Guanaxuato, which in common years brings a net income of a million and a half (50,000*l.*). The late Count of Valenciana has sometimes received from his single mine, 6 millions (240,000*l.*), in a single year. A single vein, possessed by the family of the Marquis de Fagoaga, in the district of Sombrerete, has produced

“in six months, all expenses deducted, a clear income  
“of 20,000,000.”

And yet, it is observed by the same author, nothing was more rare than the accumulation of wealth by these great proprietors, although in the amount of their gross revenue they rivalled the richest subjects of Russia or of England. This was owing partly to the spirit of speculation in mining, which made them the constant prey of needy adventurers; partly to the habit of extravagant and ill-regulated establishments, with little of real splendour or comfort; partly to the prevalence of gambling. And all these degrading characteristics together might be ascribed, originally, to the wretched policy of the government, which kept the American nobility without education, employment, or importance in their native country. Hence, when the day of revolution arrived, the natural aristocracy of the country either joined in the revolt, or was utterly incapable of offering any resistance to it.

The Spanish and Creole inhabitants of the table land of Mexico amounted to about 20 per cent. of the whole; the mixed races and Negroes (the latter extremely few), to 30; the Indians to 50; and the same proportions, with some variation, prevailed in the mountain regions of South America. The Indians, who formed the great bulk of the labourers, were by no means unhappily circumstanced in Mexico. Their legal disabilities have been already noticed. But they were subject to no compulsory service whatever. Their labour was entirely free. They worked in the mines on their own account, and for very high wages. The only labour to which they were naturally disinclined seems to have been that of manufactures; but the accounts which are given of the frauds practised by the manufacturers in getting these ignorant people into

debt by supplying them with intoxicating liquor, and then forcing them to work out their liabilities, seem to show, not that they were oppressed, but that their condition was so good that the capitalist resorted to these tricks and artifices through the difficulty of procuring the needful supply of labour.

The condition of Peru, the other great mining colony of Spain, was less favourable. The mines of that country had poured forth their treasures with astonishing fertility during the first century and half after the conquest. But their richest veins were early exhausted, and they were, besides, situated for the most part high on the ridge of the Andes, where wood and provisions were wanting, and communications extremely difficult. These disadvantages were only overcome by the profuse application of Indian labour. The unhappy natives were transported from their own valleys to a scene of incessant toil, in an air almost too attenuated for human life, at 12 or 14,000 feet above the level of the sea. Their numbers rapidly diminished, and the mines became unproductive from the increased cost of working them. Hence they could not maintain the competition with the mines of Mexico; and, even in their decay, they were still wrought by means of the "mita" or conscription of Indians, to serve by rotation for a limited period. Hence these poor people, in Mexico contented and industrious though apathetic, cherished in Peru a deep-rooted hatred of their masters. In 1782 they nearly threw off the yoke in a sanguinary rebellion under a leader who claimed descent from their ancient Incas. The general industry of Peru partook of the languor of its mining operations: the famous City of the Kings, Lima, had long sunk from its ancient and somewhat fabulous splendour to the level of a dull provincial capital. The countries of Quito

and New Granada, less rich in the precious metals, presented a greater appearance of wealth and industry. Lastly, along the border of these vast possessions, in California, on the Orinoco and Amazons with their branches, and in Paraguay, were established the Reductions or missions of religious bodies, chiefly the Jesuits. The peculiar usages and constitution of these singular settlements will deserve some attention when we come to inquire into the different methods of policy which have been pursued by colonizing governments towards native races.

This scanty outline may serve to convey some notion of the general condition of the Spanish continental colonies just before their emancipation—a condition far more prosperous and advanced than was commonly supposed in Europe, where the old traditions of their wealth and splendour had been succeeded by equally erroneous impressions respecting their decay. Had the rulers of the mother country possessed sufficient forethought to adapt their policy in time to the altered state of things, it is, perhaps, not too wild a conjecture that they might at this day have preserved some political connection between the new and old dominion. For in Spanish America, as we have seen, there existed both the elements of a nobility and an established church, from want of which England found so little support in the day of revolution in her ancient colonies, and finds so little of substantial attachment in those which she still possesses. By ceasing to make over the official patronage of America as a prey to needy Spaniards; by giving the powerful and wealthy Americans and the municipalities an interest in the government of their country; by sending princes of the house of Spain to govern those provinces as viceroys, and erecting them into dependent kingdoms; above all, by abolishing the ancient system

of restriction, and adopting a comprehensive and liberal scheme of commercial government, they might have given another turn to the destinies of the new world, and laid the foundations of an order of things essentially different from any which has yet existed. Such at least are the speculations in which political philosophy may indulge. Historically speaking, this was impossible. Providence had marked out, as it were, a different channel for the course of events, by denying to the statesmen of that day the will, the knowledge, and the power necessary for the accomplishment of such changes. They persisted, amidst the rapidly increasing discontent of their American subjects, incited as they were by the example of the United States, in their old system of government by coercion and division. They fomented mutual jealousies between colours and ranks : they set the clergy as spies over the laity, the poor over the rich : they multiplied, in every possible way, the numbers of Spanish officials, on whom they relied for support ; they watched and punished with equal severity every effort for the extension of unlicensed trade, and the expression of liberal sentiments. Yet it is doubtful how long revolution might have been delayed, from the want of union and of intelligence among the discontented, had it not been for the troubles of Spain itself, and its invasion by Napoleon. Spanish America then fell into confusion. At that moment, when the provincial governors and the military commanders were disarmed by their own uncertainty, hesitating whom to obey, their power seemed about to pass at once into the hands of the self-constituted authorities of the patriot party. It would have done so, had these known how to govern, and had they not permitted and encouraged the popular fury to vent itself against the Spanish inhabitants. But the Spaniards were a body formidable from their num-



bers alone ; they were not fewer, it is said, than 300,000 in all Spanish America : and much more so from their comparative wealth and intelligence. They soon armed in their behalf a portion of the community ; they incited the mother country to repeated efforts for the reconquest of the colonies, and raised in self-defence the most wasteful and sanguinary struggle of modern times. Independence was finally achieved, at the cost of the temporary ruin of wealth and commerce, and the destruction, in some provinces, of one half the population.

For some time after that event the affairs of the new states wore an aspect very discouraging, even to those who had been the foremost to exult in their liberation ; and appeared still more gloomy to minds more disposed to dwell on the evils of revolution. "In South America, " we see no termination to the contest that we can contemplate without pain. Whether the communities of " Spanish origin in that division of America shall be " reduced to the savage condition of the settlements of " Paraguay since the abolition of the Jesuits, or to that " of the Negro population of St. Domingo ; or whether, " after still further exhaustion and depression, they may " be induced in despair to throw themselves again at " the feet of Spain ; in any case we see nothing to console humanity for the tremendous evils to which the " conflict has given birth." So prophesied an eminent writer in 1825. He had not, perhaps, sufficiently calculated on what may be termed the elastic power of society even under the most unfavourable circumstances, when its energies are not controlled by oppressed restrictions. Much deplorable weakness, much corruption, little fitness for the practical duties of government, have been hitherto exhibited in the emancipated republics ; and the traces of the recent conflict still remain unefaced. Yet, on the whole, it is impossible to doubt that

they are making progress in many essential particulars. Slavery has been abolished ; and thus one deep though latent source of permanent evil effectually removed. A better and more natural tone of feeling seems to exist between the various races which compose the motley population : the union in arms and in sufferings has doubtless softened their mutual antipathy. Education, so long proscribed, is sought after by the rising generation, with a zeal proportioned to their awakened sense of its importance. Men have arisen more fitted for government than their predecessors, because, instructed by the experience of their own times, they have learnt to take a better measure of the wants and capacities of their countrymen, and have got rid of the first illusions of independence. Although some of the ancient branches of industry requiring extensive capital, such as mining and the cultivation of sugar, have suffered enormously, yet the condition of the mass of the population seems on the whole to have improved. This is mainly owing to free trade — the want of which was the great stimulus of the contest, and which is perhaps the most substantial reward they have hitherto acquired by it. “ My opinion “ of the revolution is this,” said a peasant of the Mexican Cordillera to Captain Hall : “ formerly I paid nine “ dollars for the piece of the cloth of which this shirt “ was made ; now I pay only two.” This was the feeling which recruited the armies of the patriots, and made their cause popular with the community in general, even when stained by the greatest excesses and devastations— a most pregnant warning to governments. Tyranny, in the ordinary sense of the word, falls heavily only on the few, and is often endured for a long time through the acquiescence of the many. But the species of oppression which is exercised by the spirit of monopoly, and affects the comforts and subsistence of the multitude,

fosters that deep-seated discontent which needs but occasion and incitement to overthrow the strongest institutions.\*

NOTE. — Although from a variety of causes their advance may appear slow, and their present state fall far short of what has been expected of them, the truth is, that they have made immense progress compared with their old condition under the colonial yoke of Spain. — *Sir Woodbine Parish, Buenos Ayres and La Plata*, p. 11.

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\* The French financier, Ouvrard, relates in his *Memoirs*, that at a late period of the Spanish colonial domination, a sort of commercial partnership was formed between himself and the king of Spain, in pursuance of which the latter agreed to furnish him with the licences necessary to introduce all manner of goods free of duty into Spanish America. Such exemptions, as M. Say truly remarks when mentioning the fact, are a real fraud on unprivileged industry. It is difficult to conceive a measure likely to produce greater or juster irritation. — *Say, Cours.* iii. 372.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE I.

SPANISH CONTINENTAL COLONIES, BEFORE AND SINCE THEIR  
INDEPENDENCE.I. *Population.*

## 1. MEXICO:—

1804. 5,900,000 (*Humboldt, Nouv. Esp.*).  
 1830. 7,000,000 (*Ibid. conjectural estimate*).  
 Now { 8,000,000 (*Murray, Ency. of Geography*).  
       { 6,700,000 (*Recent conjectural estimate*).

## 2. GUATEMALA OR CENTRAL AMERICA:—

1778. 797,000 (*Humboldt*).  
 1804. 1,204,000 (*Ibid.*).  
 Now { 1,600,000 (*Murray*).  
       { 2,000,000 (*Geographical Journal*, vol. vi.).

3. PROVINCES OF TERRA FIRMA, at one time Republic of  
Colombia:—

1775. { Venezuela . . . . . }  
       { New Granada 747,000 } . . . . .  
       { Quito (Now Ecuador) 531,000 }  
 1804. { Venezuela 900,000 }  
       { New Granada } 1,800,000 } 2,700,000 (*Humboldt*).  
       { Quito }  
 1822. All Colombia 2,643,000 (*Government Report*).  
 1825. New Granada 1,228,259 (*Census*).  
 1835. { New Granada 1,686,038 (*Census*) }  
       { Venezuela 800,000 }  
       { Ecuador 500,000 } (*Estimate*) } 2,986,000

## 4. PERU : —

1803.	{ Lower 1,076,000 ( <i>Census</i> )	}	2,789,000
	{ Upper 1,713,000? ( <i>Brackenridge</i> )		
Now	{ Peru 1,800,000 ( <i>Penny Cycl.</i> )	}	2,830,000
	{ Bolivia, 1,030,000 ( <i>M<sup>c</sup>Cul. Geog. Dict.</i> )		

## 5. CHILI : —

1813.	980,000 ( <i>Humboldt</i> ).
About 1825.	600,000? ( <i>Caldcleugh, conjectural estimate</i> ).
Now	{ 1,200,000 ( <i>M<sup>c</sup>Cul. Geog. Dict.</i> ).
	{ 1,500,000 ( <i>Murray</i> ).

## 6. LA PLATA : —

1804.	1,100,000 ( <i>Humboldt</i> ).
Now	{ La Plata 700,000? }
	{ Paraguay 300,000? }
	{ Banda Oriental 200,000? }
	1,200,000

## II. Exports.

Whole Spanish	{ 1748 to 1755. £4,960,000 ( <i>Humboldt</i> ).
Colonies	{ 1784. 13,470,000 ( <i>Ibid.</i> ).
	{ 1788. 8,550,000 ( <i>Ibid.</i> ).
(Exclusive of the Islands) 1804.	12,643,000 ( <i>Ibid.</i> ).

	1804.	1834.
1. Mexico	} £6,690,000	{ . . . . .
Central America		
	1804.	1834—37.
2. New Granada	£650,000	1837. Carthagena and Portobello } 685,000
Caraccas	850,000	
	£1,500,000	1834. Venezuela 713,000
		Guayaquil 210,000
		£1,608,000

	1804.	1837.
3. Peru	} £2,550,000	{ £1,517,473 ( <i>Mr. Porter's Tables</i> ).
Chili		
		. . . . .

	1804.	1834—5.
4. La Plata	£1,575,000	1834. Buenos Ayres £1,268,000
		1835. Banda Oriental 516,000
		£1,714,000

## LECTURE II.

SPANISH COLONIES IN THE WEST INDIES — THEIR HISTORY AND PRESENT CONDITION IN RESPECT TO WEALTH AND COMMERCE; PORTUGUESE, DUTCH, AND FRENCH COLONIES—ACCOUNT OF THEIR GOVERNMENT, COMMERCE, AND GENERAL HISTORY.

I. THE principal relics which Spain still possesses of her dismembered colonial empire, are the Philippine Islands in Asia, and Cuba and Portorico in the Gulf of Mexico. The Philippines are inhabited by a numerous and civilised Malay population, governed rather than colonised by a handful of Europeans; and, like our own possessions in the East Indies, hardly fall within the strict definition of a colony.

Towards the close of the last century, when our West India islands were rapidly advancing to the height of their prosperity, Cuba was comparatively of small importance. Its inhabitants were chiefly small landowners, cultivating the soil without the aid of slaves, for out of a population of 300,000, only a third belonged to the latter class: now its population probably amounts to a million, out of whom 400,000 are slaves. It exported upwards of 80,000 tons of sugar, or rather a greater quantity than Jamaica, before the emancipation of her slaves: at present the export from Cuba is greater still, and that from Jamaica smaller; while the superiority of the former island in the production of other colonial articles is far more decided. No less than forty new sugar estates were said last year to have been lately opened in Cuba. It is now, beyond contradic-

tion, the wealthiest and most flourishing colony possessed by any European power.

The causes of this extraordinary increase in prosperity are easily assignable :—

1. The opening of the commerce of Cuba in 1809 ; from which period the turn in its affairs may be said to have begun.

2. Its natural advantages, which are of the very highest order, but which had been of the least possible avail during the long period of commercial restriction which it underwent. The geographical position of the island, and its shape, by which scarcely any productive part of it is distant above thirty or forty miles from the sea, are highly favourable to its prosperity. But a far more important element of wealth is to be found in its great extent of fertile soil, of which the first fecundity has not yet been exhausted. The high prices which sugar attained during the late war, while our West India islands had the exclusive supply of this country, and produced a very large proportion of the whole amount consumed in Europe, induced our planters to extend their cultivation on inferior soils, which yielded gradually less and less return, or required a continually increasing outlay of capital. At this period the virgin soils of other tropical colonies and states came suddenly into competition with theirs. The same change then took place, of which, as we shall see, several instances had already occurred in colonial history. Neither the accumulated capital of prosperous years, nor agricultural skill, nor comparative abundance of slave labour, such as were then enjoyed by the British planters of the old colonies, availed to counterbalance the free gifts of nature enjoyed by these younger rivals. The British market was secured by our prohibitive duties to our own colonists ; but the rest of the world became speedily

dependent on the produce of other and newer regions ; among which the Spanish islands have been by far the most successful in the race. In the present state of Cuba, old plantations, after a considerable number of years, are for the most part deserted by the sugar producer ; new land is brought gradually into cultivation for his purpose, while the abandoned estates are devoted to raising Indian corn, and the other staple articles consumed within the island. Thus the visitor from the Havannah has many miles to go before he reaches a sugar plantation ; those earliest cultivated, near the city, having been long abandoned to other purposes. And if it be true, that only seven hundredths of the soil of Cuba\* have as yet been brought under cultivation, there appears no assignable limit, for many future years, to the increase of production. †

3. But a still more important stimulus was given to the progress of the Spanish islands in the wealth of commerce, by the abolition of the slave trade in our colonies, in 1812. In another part of this course, I shall endeavour to explain in what manner that great and just measure acted for the time unfavourably upon the economical condition of our settlements ; and how the maintenance of slavery, without the slave trade, caused

\* According to Mr. Turnbull about three millions of acres, p. 126. Forty new sugar estates were opened in 1838.

† "Luxuriant fields of sugar-cane in Cuba are managed by a new process of ratoonning, without the insertion of new plants, for twenty or even thirty years in succession. Ratoonning is the annual raising of fresh canes from the same plant ; and the number of years during which it can be carried on, is an index of the strength and richness of the soil. While this process can be carried on in Cuba for so great a length of years, the virgin soil is so rich, that a mere touch of the hoe is sufficient to prepare it for the reception of the cane. In most of the British colonies, the ratoonning lasts only three or four years ; and the ground requires the laborious process of *holing*, or some adequate substitute, as a preparation for planting."—*Gurney, Winter in the West Indies*, p. 205.



a continual drain and impoverishment to take place, while the colonies of other nations were reaping the profit of our sacrifice. For the present I will content myself with pointing out a few facts. Between the years 1800 and 1835, the population of Cuba increased from 300,000 to 800,000 : her slaves, from 100,000 to 300,000 : her exports, from the value of 600,000 to 4,000,000 : while the population of the old British West India colonies was very little augmented during that period, and their number of slaves and amount of production remained stationary or diminished. In 1830 Cuba furnished between one-fifth and one-sixth of all the sugar consumed in Europe.\*

Unhappily, or rather, I ought to say, by a just and striking retribution, the moral and social condition of this thriving island seem to have declined, under the influence of slavery and its consequences, with the same rapidity with which its wealth has advanced. At the beginning of this century, the Spaniards of the West Indies were accused with justice of indolence, and enjoyed in some respects an inferior civilization to that of their neighbours. But on the other hand, the steadier habits and greater repose of the old Castilian genius contrasted favourably with the eager, jealous, money-making character of the motley adventurers who constituted too large a proportion of the West Indian population subject to England, France, and Holland. These were a people whom no ties seemed to bind to the land of their adoption ; the home of whose recollections was in their native countries ; whose only object was the rapid attainment of wealth, in order, if possible, to return there. The Spaniards were permanent inhabitants ; they maintained, in each colony, the habits of a fixed, social,

\* Ramon de la Sagra, *Historia Económico-Política y Estadística de la Isla de Cuba*.

and organised population, with distinction of ranks and regular institutions. There are even now thirty grandees of Spain among the resident proprietors of Cuba.

As there was little profit to be obtained out of the labour of the slave, so his condition was generally easy, and the conduct of his master towards him humane and considerate. The laws of Spain encouraged this tendency, beyond those of all other nations. Instead of being an outcast from the benefits of law and religion, he was peculiarly under the protection of both. The four rights of the slave, as they are emphatically termed in Spanish legislation, have been uniformly respected in theory and generally in practice : — these are, the right of marriage ; the right to compel a master guilty of illegal severity towards a slave to sell him to another ; the right to purchase his own emancipation, and to acquire property. The sentiments of the Spaniards towards their enslaved dependents were much modified, in the course of centuries, by the wholesome spirit of their laws ; and it may perhaps be added, that if the Spanish character, under the excitement of the spirit of revenge, fanaticism, or avarice, be capable of atrocities from which the civilised mind shrinks with abhorrence, there is about it in the commonalty as well as the higher orders, when uninflamed by passion, a sense of dignity, an habitual self-respect, evincing itself in courtesy to equals and forbearance towards inferiors, of which nations of more practical but more vulgar habits of mind afford but rare examples.

But the progress of wealth and of the slave trade have rapidly changed the moral aspect of these communities. From being the most humane among all European slave owners, the Spanish colonists have become the most barbarous and utterly demoralised. This is a painful fact, of which the evidence is too abundant and too no-

torious to admit even of a suspicion of exaggeration. The sugar plantations of Cuba are now almost entirely wrought by means of the slave trade ; that is, as we shall see when we come to examine this part of the subject more closely, they are wrought at an enormous profit, purchased by an enormous expenditure of life, replaced by perpetual recruits, and the humane provisions of the law itself are turned against the imported slave. For as the trade is forbidden by law, the Bozals, as the African Negroes are called, are considered in the light of contraband articles, of which the possession and use is winked at, not recognised, by the authorities. They are thus entirely without protection, which they stand more in need of than any other class of the slaves. Nothing can be more horrible than the condition of these wretches in the inland plantations of the island, where the average duration of the life of a slave is said not to exceed ten years : in Barbadoes, in the worst period of English slavery, it was rated at sixteen. Sir Fowel Buxton believes that 60,000 slaves are annually imported into that and the other Spanish colonies. The boasted humanity of the Spanish planter has scarcely left any traces, except, it is said, in the treatment of domestic slaves. But even this is far worse than formerly ; and the whites of Cuba have occasionally resorted to the expedient of arming the Bozals as a kind of mameluke guard, to defend themselves against the dreaded hostility of the native coloured population.

The vices engendered by the increase of slave cultivation extend, as may be supposed, through all classes of society. Wealth is now as exclusively and sordidly pursued by the Spanish planter as ever it was by the Dutchman or Englishman. The words of Lord Brougham, in his early work on *Colonial Policy* \*, written before

\* Vol. i. p. 75.

the era of the prosperity of the Spanish islands had commenced, are becoming fully verified. "The great distinction in this respect arises from the indolence of their character. While they were led over the seas and mountains of the New World by the spirit of plunder, they certainly did not fall short of other adventurers in the cruel treatment of their slaves. Now that an indifference about gain has succeeded to their former eagerness after all sorts of booty, we find them no longer the same insatiable masters either to the Indians or Negroes." The tropical colonies of Spain were commonwealths at an epoch when those of most other nations were mere factories; they are now rapidly acquiring the degrading characteristics of factories, while ours, we may hope, are advancing towards the dignity of commonwealths.

It must be added, that since Cuba has been opened to the trade of the world, a very small portion of that trade remains to the Spaniard. Out of imports to the value of 16,000,000 dollars, Cuba received in 1830 only to the amount of 2,500,000 from the mother country. But, on the other hand, its revenue is so flourishing, that while in Humboldt's time its necessities were supplied out of the exchequer of Mexico, it has now for many years furnished important aid to the dilapidated finances of Spain.

One other flourishing colony of the Spaniards deserves particular notice, the island of Portorico. So excellent an account of it was published six years ago by a gallant officer in the Spanish service, Lieutenant-general Flint, that we really possess a far more accurate knowledge of its economical and social condition, than of those of other countries much better known and more frequently visited. And the phenomena which it presents, merit

our particular attention : they show a state of things very different from that which is exhibited in modern times by any other West Indian community : they will throw light on several of the great problems in colonial economy with which we shall hereafter concern ourselves.

While Spain possessed her continental empire, Portorico, like most of her other insular possessions, was altogether neglected by the mother state. It was a penal settlement, to which criminals were transported, raising no surplus produce, and unknown by name in the commercial world. But it had the advantage of being well situated for the contraband trade with Mexico; and this circumstance, joined to the fertility of its soil, seems to have collected on its surface, even at the beginning of this century, a considerable population, *almost entirely of white origin*. In 1815, its trade was subjected by the Spanish government to a new code of regulations of the most liberal description. Lands were granted to settlers gratis; their extent to bear a proportion to the number of slaves imported. Slaves were rendered liable to a low and fixed poll-tax. Produce was freed from export duties. Tithes were remitted for fifteen years, and fixed after that time at a low commutation. The alcavala, a duty on the sale of commodities peculiar to Spain, was remitted for a like period. Foreign goods were admitted, subject to an *ad valorem* duty of 17 per cent. Under these regulations, the face of the island was transformed as if by enchantment. In twenty years its population doubled, and now exceeds 400,000 on a space of 4000 square miles; it is the best peopled spot of any extent in the whole of America. In the same twenty years, the exports were more than quadrupled. The export of sugar from Portorico, in 1830, was more than half of that from Jamaica.

But the singular part of the history of Portorico is that this extraordinary progress took place with scarcely any increase in the relative amount of the slave population, always smaller in its proportion to the free than in any other West Indian colony. In 1810 it had about 165,000 free and 17,000 slave inhabitants; in 1830, 300,000 free and 34,000 slaves; and the mass of the free population, as may be supposed, was white, and of pure Spanish descent. "The planter of Portorico," says Lieutenant-general Flinter, "differs essentially from the same class in the British islands. In the latter, the proprietors of large estates generally reside in Europe, leaving the management of their property to resident agents. Even those who possess small estates, seldom establish themselves permanently in the country, but hoard up their earnings for the purpose of returning to Europe. In Portorico the inhabitants of old Spain, who establish themselves either in commerce or agriculture, in general become heads of families, whose branches extend in every direction. The estates are not fitted up on the grand and expensive scale in which they are seen in the English and French islands; but the planter residing on his land with his family becomes a fixed and permanent part of the population, and of white society."

But besides the planters properly so called, Portorico contained a very numerous class of small white proprietors. Nearly a third of the whole population were freemen, with their families, cultivating their own small estates, and principally white: these Xivaros, as they are called, were a frank, robust, hearty race, neither very industrious nor over refined, and utterly wanting in education, but well disposed and well conducted in essentials, and living with the coloured people on terms of remarkable forbearance. I have myself heard

a visitor to that colony, who was familiar with the habits of the West Indian islanders, remark, that it was difficult in Portorico to distinguish the master from the slave. All these circumstances indicated a state of society not very favourable, perhaps, either to the accumulation of enormous fortunes, or to civilization; but incomparably better, in essential respects, than that of the communities in which slaves constituted the mass of the inhabitants. And it will be observed that the condition of Portorico thus described directly contradicts two prevalent notions; it shows that an European population will thrive and multiply with extraordinary rapidity in a West Indian climate, and that West Indian produce may be raised by free labour; for it is certain, that part of the sugar of Portorico, and almost all the rest of its exportable wealth, have been thus produced, until of late years.\*

But I have spoken in the past tense, because there seems reason to fear that the extraordinary tide of prosperity which has set in of late on the Spanish islands has at length materially altered for the worse the social condition of this flourishing colony. So long as the fertility of its lands remains unexhausted, it is probable that the slovenly labour of small free proprietors may continue to raise a considerable quantity of exportable produce; but it cannot be doubted that much of its surface is no longer in this condition. The island, therefore, is reaching that second stage of which I shall speak more at length when we touch on the situation of the British colonies. It is becoming less practicable to cultivate the soil successfully, except in large estates, by the aid of much capital, and with numerous gangs of

\* According to General Flinter, Portorico contained in 1830 45,000 free labourers possessing no land of their own (p. 251.).

slaves. We have no account of its state more recent than that of General Flint, who seems to have been struck, even then, with indications of the approaching change. Since the appearance of his work, the enormous importation of slaves into Portorico, in proportion to the extent of the island, seems too clearly to point out that it is proceeding in the same direction. If so, its destinies, like those of Cuba, are fixed; and nothing can save them both eventually from accomplishing the unfortunate career which the other great West Indian colonies have each in its turn gone through.

In the mean time, by comparing the state of the Spanish islands with that of the British, immediately before the late emancipation, it will appear that the former contained, in round numbers, 700,000 free white inhabitants, the latter barely 80,000; the former 250,000 free coloured, the latter 60 or 70,000; the former less than 450,000 slaves, the latter more than 800,000. Notwithstanding this inferiority in slave labour, the former produced about two-thirds of the quantity of sugar raised in the latter, and a much greater proportion of other tropical commodities. To what causes are we to attribute this difference, unfortunate in an economical no less than a social point of view? Whence arises it that we, with all our boasted wisdom and civilization, have entered on a career which has led to such deplorable results with regard to the political well-being of our own colonies, while it has led us astray even in the pursuit of that lucre to which we had sacrificed justice and mercy? These are questions which it will be hereafter our task to consider. But it may be once more observed in passing, that the Spanish colonies have over ours the great advantage of an unexhausted soil, owing to the recent date of their cultivation. If General Flint is to be believed, the average produce of sugar in Jamaica is about 10 cwt.



per acre ; in St. Vincent, the most fertile of the Caribbean islands, 25 ; in Portorico, 30. Now it is possible that a cultivation like that of sugar, while the soil requires little manure and the return is pretty certain, may be pursued on a small scale by proprietors possessing little command of labour. Such may be the case in Portorico, and to a certain extent in Cuba. But when fertility diminishes, and crops can only be secured by a great outlay of capital and labour, the small planter must give way to the capitalist ; plantations will be considerable ; and the numerous free population of little proprietors, of which General Flintor boasts, must, it should seem, either cease to exist or abandon that branch of agriculture. These speculations, however, must not be relied on too confidently in the absence of better statistical data than we possess.

II. "No nation," says Southey, "has ever accomplished such great things in proportion to its means as the Portuguese." Its early maritime history does indeed present a striking picture of enterprise and restless energy ; but the annals of Europe afford no similar instance of rapid degeneracy. To the lover of romantic narrative, the account of the establishment of the Portuguese in the Indies should be more interesting even than the traditions of Cortes and Pizarro ; since with means as feeble they had much longer and more serious conflicts to maintain. There was an age when less than 40,000 armed Portuguese kept the whole coasts of the ocean in awe, from Morocco to China ; when 150 sovereign princes paid tribute to the treasury of Lisbon. But in all their enterprises they aimed at conquest, and not at colonization. The government at home exercised little control over the arms of its piratical warriors ; the mother country derived no benefit from their achievements. To the age of conquest succeeded

one of effeminacy and corruption. "The principal defects in the Portuguese administration of India," says Heeren, "seem to have been the following: 1. The very frequent changes of viceroys (at least triennial) which were usually attended with a change of most of the other officers; the offices were therefore triennial benefices. 2. The restrictions, which gradually became greater, on the power of the viceroys. 3. The state of commerce, which, left open to the civil and military officers, degenerated into very oppressive monopolies. 4. The defective administration of justice. 5. The overpowering influence of the clergy, who by their wealth made themselves masters of every thing, and their tyranny." The Portuguese have long been expelled from Asia, except a few insulated settlements, such as Goa and Macao. In Africa they possess several establishments, of the condition of which little is known in Europe, but which appear to be maintained chiefly for the purpose of protecting their slave trade. But in America they have been the founders of a great and flourishing monarchy. It has been often repeated, that the empire of Brazil fell to the Portuguese through the consequences of a geographical error. The bull of Pope Alexander, of which mention has already been made, assigned to this power all new discovered lands, east of a line drawn one hundred leagues west of the Azores. Much ridicule has been very unnecessarily thrown upon this bold decree of the pontiff, by which he disposed of unknown regions as their absolute proprietor; but Alexander was an able statesman, whose object was, by this act of arbitration, to prevent quarrels between two powers, whose union was essential to his views. He evidently intended by it to restrain the Portuguese to the eastern hemisphere, leaving the Spaniards to pursue, without interruption, their conquests in the other. But either

through ignorance or intentionally, the first discoverers of Brazil placed its longitude to the east of the prescribed line. Its coast was consequently seized on by the crown of Portugal, and its limits have been gradually extended by treaties, until it comprehends the greatest and by far the most valuable portion of tropical America south of the equator. For a long time, indeed, its possession was little coveted by Europeans. Having searched the shores of every accessible inlet for the precious metals, and disappointed of their expectations, the Portuguese almost abandoned it. Asia was then the road to fortune and fame, which drew off all the more energetic spirits of the time. Brazil was used only as a place of transportation for convicts; the earliest instance, I believe, of the adoption of such a system by any modern people. To ordinary malefactors were afterwards joined the victims of the Inquisition; and the unfortunate Jews who were sent thither by that tribunal, first introduced the cultivation of sugar. Free emigrants were thus attracted in the course of time by the increasing wealth of the country; and when Thomas de Souza was sent out as governor in 1558, and reduced it for the first time to an orderly and peaceful state, it had already made considerable progress.

The colonization of the Portuguese in America was, as has been seen, of a far less ambitious character than that of the Spaniards; no large feudal grants were made of land and Indians; no ground-plans of magnificent cities traced in the soil of the wilderness to invite inhabitants; no regular and complicated system of administration adopted. The organisation of the colony followed instead of preceding its advance, and grew up by degrees as necessity required. Thus the foundation of this empire more nearly resembled that of our own American colonies; and its fortune, if less brilliant,

was more solid than that of any of the Spanish provinces, Mexico itself not excepted. The Portuguese began, like the Spaniards, by reducing the natives to slavery. But these were far less advanced in civilization and less numerous than those of Peru and Mexico; their labour consequently contributed less to the improvement of the colony. In 1570 the influence of the clergy over the government at Lisbon procured a decree that no Indians should be made slaves, except those taken in war; but even this modified prohibition was wholly disregarded by the colonists. Some feeble attempts were occasionally made to enforce it; but the conquest of the greater part of Brazil by the Dutch West India Company, between 1626 and 1640, interrupted for a time all legislation in this direction. After the re-conquest in 1640, the great work was accomplished: 200,000 Indians living within the territory occupied by the planters, were settled in villages, and placed under the direction of Jesuit missionaries. It was in this manner that the power of that famous society in America had its origin; its operations afterwards extended, as is well known, far over the interior of the continent; and it became in Paraguay the founder and the ruler of one of the most singular republics which ever existed upon the earth. But the treatment of the native Americans by the Spanish and Portuguese missionaries will, as I have said, furnish matter for separate consideration. The Portuguese, like the Spaniards, replaced Indian labour to a great extent by that of Negroes. But several circumstances contributed to give a much greater extension to the Portuguese slave trade than the Spanish, at least until recent times. The principal of these were the proximity of Brazil to the coast of Africa; an advantage of no small consequence in a traffic in which so large a proportion of the living cargo usually perishes

on the voyage ; and the superior fertility and extent of that portion of the Portuguese colony which is suited for the cultivation of tropical produce. No country in the world has so great a breadth of highly productive soil as Brazil.

The treatment of Negro slaves in Brazil, at least up to the present century, is said to have been in general good. Education and marriage, so long and disgracefully denied them by other masters, were promoted among them by the Portuguese. The Roman Catholic Church has always proved a protector and a friend to these unfortunates ; and even its superstitions reached them in a favourable light, since they served to reconcile them to their condition. The slaves of the Franciscan community in Bahia were wont to esteem themselves the property of the blessed Saint Francis himself, and prided themselves on this glorious servitude above the free men of their colour. But I fear that the pictures which have been drawn of their general condition in Brazil, if true at any time, are not so at the present day. The rapid increase of wealth, and slavery along with it, has rendered the Brazilian more timid, more cruel, more avaricious than formerly. Mr. Southey was so misled by his partiality for the Portuguese as to prophecy, only sixteen years ago, that "Brazil would probably be the first "country where the benefit of that great measure, the "peculiar glory of England" (the abolition of the slave trade) "would be experienced : "for," adds he, "its "tendency will be assisted by the principles of the government, the influence of the clergy, and the general "spirit of the laws.\*" Such were the anticipations of 1824 ; and, in 1838, 35,000 Negroes were imported into Brazil.

\* History of Brazil, ii. 817.

Raynal, in language perhaps too highly coloured to be accurate, draws a more unfavourable picture of the character of the higher classes of Bahia at the time of the greatest splendour of that city. "Hypocrisy in some, superstition in others, avarice within and ostentation abroad, an extreme effeminacy which borders on extreme cruelty, in a climate where all sensations are quick and impetuous; the suspicions which accompany weakness; an indolence which rests entirely on slaves for the care both of their affairs and their pleasure." The prosperity of the northern provinces of Brazil, for a long time the most important, underwent a serious interruption in the middle of the last century, from the commercial measures of a minister, who was regarded as one of the most liberal statesmen of his time. The trade of Brazil had previously been conducted on a system similar to that of the Spanish colonies, but somewhat less oppressive. The vessels which carried it on sailed in fleets once a year, and the number was limited, but it was much greater than that employed in the Spanish American trade, and visited a larger number of ports. This was the state of things when Pombal, in 1755, created the exclusive companies of Maranhão and Pernambuco, and placed in their hands all the trade of Northern Brazil: thus returning to a vicious system, which Portugal, up to that time, had never encouraged, at a period when all other nations had nearly abandoned it. The bad effects of this measure in Brazil are said to have been felt immediately in diminished production; but as the manufactures with which that country were supplied in exchange for her produce came not from the mother country, but from other European nations through the vessels of the mother country, the loss was not so sensibly felt in Portugal.

Of the other great measure of Pombal's Brazilian administration, his emancipation of the Indians from the control of the Jesuits, I shall find another occasion to speak.

The more modern importance of the southern provinces of Brazil was owing, at least in part, to different causes. If there was any justice in the strong expression of the historian Herrera, that mines were a lure disposed by the Evil Principle to draw the Spaniards on to destruction, the Portuguese were fortunate in the circumstance that the precious metals were not discovered in their American empire until a late period of its colonization, when agriculture and commerce had already taken root in the soil. It was not until about the year 1700 that the first gold mines began to be wrought in the arid Serras of the interior. The first successful miners seem to have been the Paulistas, a singular race, of semi-republican habits, sprung for the most part from runaway convicts and Indian women. These people established themselves in the town and district of St. Paul in South Brazil, where they maintained themselves, in independence of the crown of Portugal, for more than a century. Their history forms one of the most curious episodes in that of America. They overran the whole interior of Brazil, from the Paraná to the tributaries of the Amazons, carrying on perpetual warfare with the Indians, and reducing such as they could master to slavery. The Paulistas were not induced to recognise the government of Brazil until 1730; and long since, indeed even to the present day, they have remained distinguished from their neighbours by their dress and customs, and a sort of piratical spirit of independence.

The gold mines have proved but a temporary source of wealth to Brazil. "Villa Rica, the capital of the

“ mining district, was,” says Southey, “ at one time the “ richest place in the world, if mines alone were riches.” But the trade of the gold searcher appears to be still more precarious than that of the silver miner. Gold is distributed in still more uncertain proportions on the surface, than silver in the body, of the metalliferous strata. Great fortunes were occasionally made, and much impulse given to commerce ; but the mining district of Brazil has never exhibited the general wealth and splendour of Mexico. The mines of gold were left perfectly free to adventurers by the government, on payment of a tax of one-fifth. It is a remarkable fact, that the anticipations of those who predicted a nearer approximation of the value of gold and silver, from the great increase in the supply of the former metal after the discovery of the Brazilian mines, have proved futile. It may be doubted whether this was owing to the cause to which Raynal attributes it, namely, the increased use of gold for ornamental purposes, or to the augmented productiveness of the Mexican silver mines. The search for diamonds, another precious commodity, not discovered in Brazil until 1730, was subjected to much severer regulations. It was placed entirely in the hands of an exclusive company, of which the government itself was the agent ; which was restricted to the employment of a limited number of slaves, doubtless with the same views which actuated the Dutch in fixing the number of spice trees cultivated in the Malay islands, namely, to enhance the value of the article. The regulation in the latter case was as cruel as it was erroneous in an economical point of view ; for spices being an agreeable and useful, yet not necessary commodity, their consumption would probably have extended if the production had been free, so as to overbalance any diminution of price. But as the value of precious stones is purely imaginary, and is so



enhanced by rarity, that it appears to increase in much more than an inverse proportion to their abundance, there appears some reason in economical policy, why a government should exercise a controul over their production. But the terrible methods by which that of Portugal endeavoured to repress contraband practices in a branch of industry, if such it may be called, peculiarly liable to them, rendered it a nuisance to the colony. The penalty of death having been found insufficient to check such practices, the whole country around, in a circumference of 100 leagues, was reduced to a desert, in which not a house was permitted to be raised, except the single village in which the labourers on the mines resided. The more recent history of the diamond mines is given by M. de St. Hilaire up to 1817. In that year, when his visit was made, they had dwindled into comparative insignificance ; but the system of restriction still continued. \*

It was the trade of the mining districts, with some other favourable circumstances, which elevated Rio Janeiro to the first rank among the cities of Brazil. In the latter part of the last century it superseded the old capital Bahia, and, in 1807, became the residence of the royal family of Portugal, when driven from their European dominions by the French invasion.

This great political change having been brought about through the intervention of England, the latter power, for her own purposes, procured freedom of trade to be established in Brazil — a singular instance of a great internal benefit resulting to a nation through the temporary interference of a foreign country in her affairs.

\* According to M. Eschwege, about 20,000 Negroes were still employed by it in 1823. He estimates the total value of the diamond workings in eighty years at a sum hardly exceeding eighteen months' produce of sugar or coffee in Brazil !

It was followed by the immediate removal of all the restrictions which had formed a part of the ancient colonial system. The ports of Brazil were thrown open to foreign goods in foreign vessels, on payment of an *ad valorem* duty, for purposes of revenue only ; and then England became, in a certain sense, the metropolis of Brazil. Perfect freedom was given to internal industry ; and a country in which, up to that time, not a single book had ever been printed, became the seat of a court, a representative government, and what are called national institutions.

The suddenness of the change has been attended with many political inconveniences ; but, economically speaking, the progress of Brazil in the last thirty years has been enormous, notwithstanding the decay in the produce of her mines, which fell off in the beginning of this century. The war between England and America, by raising the price of cotton, gave a stimulus to the cultivation of that staple commodity ; and the rich soils of Brazil now compete at a great advantage with the exhausted fields of the islands, in the production of sugar and other tropical merchandise. But her prospects, in a more comprehensive sense, are sufficiently gloomy. The rapid increase of wealth has unfortunately silenced the voice of policy and humanity, which in the last century were no where more willingly listened to than in Portugal ; and the extension of the slave trade has more than kept pace with the progress of wealth. Hence cruelty and licentiousness, and the other vices of slavery, once confined to the great sea ports, seem to be corrupting the Brazilian character even in the remotest districts. The slaves are every where outnumbering the free cultivators ; the coloured freemen increasing more rapidly than the whites ; and this latter class of mixed population, no less, it is said, than 600,000

in number out of five or six millions in all, endowed with physical strength and mental energy far more abundantly than the degenerate Creole race, seems to threaten the present frame of society with more immediate danger than awaits it from the slaves themselves.

The Dutch, says Heeren, have not been great colonists, for there were no causes in operation in their own country which could drive them in any considerable numbers beyond sea. Thickly peopled as their country is, its industrious and contented inhabitants have shown little disposition to emigrate, having always found employment and support at home; consequently their foreign establishments, although interesting in many points of view to the commercial historian, need not detain us long. Their first settlements in the Indies were wrested in war from the Portuguese, by a company of merchant adventurers, who obtained from the mother country exclusive rights of dominion and commerce in them. The Dutch East India Company was the type and model of that of England; and "although," to use the words of the same writer, "it sank at last under the evils of monopolies, it nevertheless remains, less on account of the extent than the pre-eminence of its prosperity, an unparalleled phenomenon, which could no where exist except among a people who could become exceedingly rich without becoming luxurious." Batavia and the Cape of Good Hope were the only colonies, properly so called, of the company; and that body allowed and encouraged the people engaged in the carrying trade, both Europeans and Indians, to make as much use as possible of both; to which the prosperity of these admirably situated settlements, particularly the former, is in great measure to be attributed. Over the remainder of its possessions, which were conquests and not colonies, the company watched with a jealousy equal to that of the Spaniards

and Portuguese. It is well known that it obtained possession of the islands in which alone some kinds of spices (especially cloves) were cultivated, and limited the number of plantations and of trees, and the annual supply of the European market, in order to keep up the price. We have seen that the immediate effect of such a monopoly is, sometimes, to raise the price of the article in more than an inverse ratio to the diminution of supply; its ultimate effect is to narrow the market, to diminish the desire for an article of which the quantity is so limited as to render it unattainable except to a few, and to encourage competition to find out substitutes of inferior value. Similar maxims, however, pervaded the whole administration of the Dutch East India Company. Its good points were, the severe watchfulness exercised over inferior functionaries by the governor and council established at Batavia, which rendered their conduct widely different from the license and rapine of the Portuguese; the prohibition enforced against them of trading on their own account, and making profit of the subjects of the company in any way; the regularity, and in some respects the economy, of its administration. It declined partly through the natural unsoundness of monopoly, partly through the consequences of its own wealth and prosperity. That prosperity led it to form expensive establishments, which involved it in debt; and, thus burdened, it was ill able to withstand the competition of the English, either in commerce or in war, while these were as yet free from similar impediments. This is an advantage which the new comer always has over the established possessor in the rivalry of conquest and commerce in distant regions: the Dutch had it over the Portuguese, whose prosperity declined as soon as they substituted empire for trade; the English had it in their turn over the Dutch; and in some branches of

commerce the Americans seem now to be attaining it over ourselves. The Dutch East India Company may be said to have died a natural death, having become virtually bankrupt some time before its dissolution in 1792. Java, the principal relic of its dominions, is now a royal colony, and apparently a flourishing one ; although the Dutch have been involved in serious wars with the natives, whom they are said to have exasperated by abandoning the liberal principles imported into its administration during its short possession by the English.

In America the Dutch, in early times, enjoyed almost exclusively the carrying trade of the colonies of other nations, and long afterwards were largely engaged in furnishing contraband supplies to those of England and France, as well as of Spain and Portugal. Their two islands, Curaçoa and Saint Eustatius, were rendered free ports, contrary to the usual policy of the nation, on purpose to enable them to afford shelter and security to this traffic. Under these circumstances, and with the advantage of Dutch perseverance, the prosperity and wealth of these little spots has always been remarkable. Dutch Guiana was long under the government of the West India or Surinam Company ; but this body permitted its access to all Dutch vessels on payment of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for a license ; which relaxation, as Adam Smith thought, was the principal cause of the degree of prosperity enjoyed by that colony in his time. One of the continental colonies (Berbice) was for a short time under the exclusive government of a mercantile house, that of Van Peere, which had bought its absolute sovereignty of the state — an unique instance, I believe, in colonial history.

Of the Swedish and Danish colonies, limited to three or four of the smaller Antilles, nothing more need be said than that their actual value is very small ; but that

they have occasionally been raised to great importance as seats of the contraband trade, especially in time of war.

The history of the colonies of the French in America is interesting on many accounts ; but as war and revolutions have reduced their transatlantic empire, once so vast, to three comparatively insignificant islands, and a single spot on the continent, it must not be allowed to occupy much of our limited space. It is hardly remembered at the present day, that this nation once claimed, and had begun to colonize, the whole region which lies at the back of the thirteen original United States, from the mouth of the St. Lawrence to that of the Mississippi ; comprising both the Canadas, and the vast and fertile valley of the Ohio ; and had actually occupied the two outlets of this whole region by its posts at Quebec and New Orleans. Canada, the oldest French colony, and the only one on the continent to which that nation has sent any considerable number of settlers, was under the management of an exclusive company from 1663 to the downfall of what was called the Mississippi scheme in 1720 : and this circumstance, still more perhaps than the vicious system of granting the land to non resident proprietors, to be held by seignorial tenure, checked its progress. Louisiana, with more sources of surplus wealth from climate and soil, was never a very thriving colony, and was surrendered to Spain with little reluctance ; from which last power its dominion passed to the United States. But that propensity to little peddling traffic, requiring more of activity and enterprise than industry, which Burke has remarked on as so characteristic of the French, stimulated their adventurers to disperse themselves in the fur trade and the chase, over the whole interior of North America. No other Europeans have ever displayed equal talents for conciliating savages ; or,

it must be added, for approximating to their usages and modes of life. The French traders and hunters intermarried and mixed with the Indians at the back of our settlements, and extended their scattered posts along the whole course of the two vast rivers of that continent. Even at this day, far away on the upper waters of these mighty streams, and beyond the utmost limits reached by the backwoodsman, the traveller discovers villages in which the aspect and social usages of the people, their festivities and their solemnities, in which the white and red man mingle on equal terms, strangely contrast with the habits of the Anglo-Americans, and announce to him on his first approach their Gallic origin.\*

In the Antilles the French first established themselves as interlopers, sometimes uniting with ourselves in piratical hostilities against the Spaniards and the Carib natives, and sometimes disputing with us the possession of the conquests thus obtained. After the long conflict between the two nations at the beginning of the last century, the French remained in possession of the best share of the Windward Islands — Guadeloupe, Martinique, St. Lucia, Tobago, &c. and of a settlement on the main land of Guiana. Adam Smith is probably right in attributing the great prosperity of the French sugar islands, at this period, to the circumstance of their irregular and almost piratical foundation. As the colonists had no very close ties with the mother country, and were always disposed, as Raynal says, to welcome the strongest masters as the safest protectors, the government was afraid to irritate them by any very oppressive restrictions on their industry; and afterwards, when more regular authority was established, the same system of government adopted by France

\* Sismondi, Etudes sur l'Eco. Polit.

century was at least better in theory than that of any other European people. Their administration in 1789 was entrusted to the Council of Commerce, composed of twelve officers of the crown, and twelve delegates of the chief commercial towns. Each colony was ruled by a governor; an intendant, in whose hands were the fiscal and other rights of the crown; and a town council composed of distinguished persons. All intendants were paid by salaries only; while in our colonies the leading to all manner of extortion, formed the principal income of the officers. It was an extraordinary regulation that captains of ships, on their return from a colonial port, should be subjected to a strict inquiry as to the treatment which they had received in the transaction of their business there, the state of the markets, and the conduct of government agents. Land in all French colonies was pretty uniformly disposed of by auction, a system which was then thought extraordinary, and which subsequent experience has shown to be a questionable policy. Taxation was ~~very~~ <sup>limited</sup> to a capitation on slaves, and a slight ~~capitation~~ <sup>excise</sup> on ~~consumables~~ <sup>consumables</sup>.

ing, it is said, to scarcely 2 per cent. on the value of the article of produce, was all that the government. An easy and established for levying debts the country: one of the greatest management of colonies far as law could permit. Code Noir showed a high civil



evaded by every possible means, a regulation which only tended to burden them with the maintenance of lazy emigrants.

It was the fashion in England, during the period of the great prosperity of the French settlements, to extol their colonial administration as far superior to our own \*; and, on the whole, not unjustly in some respects. The colonies certainly could not complain of it; for its policy systematically tended to burden the mother country at their expense. The cost of their government was almost wholly defrayed by the latter. The prohibition of foreign sugar in the French markets, according to Arthur Young, amounted to a tribute paid by France to the colonies of nearly two millions sterling annually, upon principles which we shall have hereafter to study, when considering the colonial system of trade; and the advantage of this tribute was not counterbalanced, as in ours, by taxes and restrictions weighing heavily on the colonial producer. In fact, the French government of the eighteenth century seems to have fallen into the double error of taxing the resources of the mother country, in order to support colonies which were not integral parts of its strength, and neglecting that maritime force by which alone the colonies could be preserved.

But the vices of administration incidental to a government so corrupt as that of old France were sensibly felt in her foreign dependencies, notwithstanding the partiality with which they were treated by her legislators. Court favour was the only source which supplied them with governors and other executive officers—a source even more tainted than that of parliamentary interest among ourselves. Men without fortunes or character, ruined in their own country, eagerly sought and obtained these appointments, which were commonly regarded as the last resource

\* See especially Burke's *European Settlements in America*.

of a spendthrift. Much ignorance, as well as much corruption, prevailed in all the details of office. A singular proof at once of the zeal for colonization which animated the government, and the extreme mismanagement of the national resources, occurred after the peace of Paris in 1763. In accordance with a theory of the day, it was determined to raise at once a full grown colony on the continent of America. No less than twelve thousand unfortunates were embarked from France, and landed in Cayenne, without an attempt towards preparing the tropical wilderness for their reception. They were amply supplied with two years' provisions at an enormous expence ; but it had never occurred to the managers of the expedition, that provisions would not keep in such a climate, and before cultivation had commenced they were starving. Famine and fevers in a few months almost destroyed them ; of the few survivors about 1500 were removed to an alluvial spot on the coast ; a sudden rise of one of the rivers of the interior took place, and all were swept away in a single night.\*

However, the French sugar colonies increased so greatly in general prosperity, that about the time of the American war, they were supposed to contain no less than 700,000 inhabitants, of whom four fifths were slaves, without including the flourishing isles of France and Bourbon in the Indian ocean. Their produce at the same time was considerably greater than that of the English possessions. At the head of them all was the splendid colony of St. Domingo. It arose out of the settlement of a few French buccaneers and adventurers on the coast of that island, which was owned by the Spaniards, who had reduced it to a desert, having extir-

\* This story is somewhat differently told in the *Notices Statistiques sur les Colonies Françaises*, vol. ii. published by authority in 1837.

pated the Indian inhabitants. The Spaniards made no use of their possession except for breeding cattle : the French were agricultural and enterprising. They soon outnumbered their neighbours, and obtained at last by treaty a division of the island for themselves. After the soil of the smaller Antilles had been in good measure exhausted, as we have seen, St. Domingo became for a time the greatest sugar country in the world. Its exports increased from the value of 11,000,000 livres in 1711, to 193,000,000, or about 8,000,000 sterling, in 1788 ; that is, more than twice those of Jamaica at the present day in money value, and still more exceeding them in quantity.\* Its trade employed 1000 ships, and 15,000 French seamen. The planters of St. Domingo had been for a long time content to live on their own estates ; but the island presented in the end a remarkable instance of that striking fact in the history of slave colonies, that with the increase of wealth, men of the higher order are almost sure to become absentees, and the middle, thus elevated into the highest rank, to increase in profligacy and cruelty. “ The spectacle presented by the cities,” says an observer, writing at the time of their highest prosperity, “ is dismal and monotonous. There are neither nobles, nor citizens, nor fundholders. They offer nothing but establishments for the various commodities produced by the soil, and for the various kinds of labour which these require. The only society is that of agents, publicans, and adventurers, bustling in search of some situation which may maintain them, and accepting the first which presents itself. Every man hurries to become rich,

\* According to Barclay (*Past and Present State of the West Indies*, 1826), every inhabitant of St. Domingo in 1791 raised on the average 692 lbs. of produce ; every inhabitant of Jamaica, at the beginning of this century, 775 lbs. But I am not sure that his calculation is sufficiently favourable to the former colony.

“in order to escape for ever from an abode where men live without distinction, without honours, and without any excitement but that of interest.” \* It is curious to compare this description with that given by a recent traveller of the aspect of the towns in the modern French islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe, flourishing islands, but which have escaped what I may justly call the curse of the enormous and rapid wealth of St. Domingo. Mr. Coleridge† was struck with the tokens of the residence of the better classes, evinced in the outward aspect of things, the shops, libraries, and places of public amusement; and contrasted it with the dulness of the English West Indian cities, wealthier, but with less social and civilised enjoyment.

Such was St. Domingo when the French Revolution broke out, the loveliest, and the wealthiest, island of the tropical oceans—an object of jealousy to England, of admiration to the rest of Europe. Sarcasm and indignation have been properly lavished on those who first preached equality of rights to its free coloured population, armed one class against another, and produced that dreadful struggle which ended in the expulsion of the French, and establishment of the Black Republic amidst the smoking ashes of cities and plantations. Rash and presumptuous they were, beyond a doubt; yet, on the whole, posterity has learned to judge them less harshly, as men who, notwithstanding the precipitancy of all their actions, and the injustice of some, yet erred in the means rather than the end; who saw and judged rightly the incurable malady which preyed on the vitals of a community so apparently prosperous; who failed from over confidence in a good cause, and had none of the advantages of that experience which they have left as a legacy to ourselves.

\* Ency. Methodique, *art.* ST. DOMINGUE.

† Visit to the West Indies, 1825.

France now retains only the islands of Martinique and Guadaloupe, already mentioned; the continental colony of Cayenne, or French Guiana; the Isle Bourbon in the Indian ocean, and one or two ports on the coast of Africa; besides her recent acquisition of Algiers, which cannot as yet be termed a colony. According to Say, the price of sugar produced in the French Antilles was, when he wrote, in comparison with that exported from the Havana, as fifty to thirty-five; the difference, therefore, was paid by the French people, who were restricted to the use of the former as a tribute to the colonists. Since that period, the extended cultivation of beet-root for sugar, under the marked protection of the government, is said to have given a severe blow to their prosperity. According to the same writer, the revenue raised in these colonies in 1820 amounted to 6,000,000 francs, their expenses to twelve; the other six, therefore, were so much additional tribute.\*

The French legislature has been for some time contemplating a scheme for the enfranchisement of Negro slaves; and seems in danger of being behind hand with the progress of events, for the vicinity of those islands to the British renders the subordination of the slaves extremely precarious; the situation of their masters, on the other hand, is said to be very embarrassed.† Single emancipations have been extremely numerous; 34,000 slaves have been rendered free in the French colonies since 1830, the total number now remaining being only 250,000. Every thing is therefore prepared for the approaching change.

\* Com. d'Economie Politique, vol. iii.

† According to the report of the commission of 1839, for examining the proposition of M. Tracy on slavery (prepared by M. de Tocqueville, and highly worthy of examination) the mortgages contracted in ten years in Guadaloupe and Martinique amounted to 130,000,000 francs, or about one quarter of the whole agricultural property of the islands.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE II.

## No. I.

*Population.*

## BRAZIL : —

1798.	More than 3,000,000 ( <i>Humboldt</i> ).
1810.	4,000,000 ( <i>Correa da Serra, Humboldt</i> ).
1819.	3,617,000 ( <i>Official Report, imperfect</i> ).
1823.	5,130,418.
1830.	{ 5,300,000 ( <i>Malte Brun</i> ).
	{ 5,735,502 ( <i>Cannabich</i> ).
1840.	6,500,000 to 7,000,000 ( <i>M<sup>c</sup>Culloch</i> ).

*Exports.*

1840. £5,500,000.

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## No. II.

*Slave Population.**Exports.*

## SAINT DOMINGO : —

1715.	.....	11,000,000 livres.
1721.	.....	21,000,000 (sugar only).
1764.	{ <i>Jeffrey's West In-</i> <i>dia Atlas</i> }	206,000
1774.	.....	109,400,000 ( <i>Malouet</i> ).
1775.	{ ( <i>Malouet</i> ) 300,000 ( <i>Official Returns</i> ) 240,000 }	94,162,000 (sugar and coffee only).
1779.*	( <i>Neckar</i> )	249,098
1784.	( <i>Official Returns</i> )	297,079
1788.	.....	193,000,000
1789.	{ ( <i>Same, improved</i> ) 434,429 ( <i>B. Edwards</i> ) 480,000 }	
1790.	.....	455,000 155,000,000
<hr/>		
.....	Total Population	- 540,000

\* After this year, the great importation of Negroes began. The average importation from 1775 to 1780 was 15,000: from 1780 to 1790, 26,000. According to M. Malouet, 4,000 or 5,000 births, and 18,000 imported, were required annually to keep up the stock.

## No. III.

STATISTICS of the four principal French Colonies; abstracted from the "Notices Statistiques sur les Colonies Françaises," published by authority in 1837.

Population.					Exports.	
Years.	Whites.	Free coloured.	Slaves.	Total.	Years.	France.
1. MARTINIQUE : —						
1736	-	-	72,000	99,284	1736	16,000,000
1790	10,635	5,235	83,414		1790	31,465,043
1835	37,955		78,076	116,031	1825	37,346,239
	about 9,000				1835	32,954,688
Average of the last ten years, about - - - £1,400,000						
2. GUADALOUPE : —						
1759	9,643	-	41,000	107,226	1790	20,667,000
1790	13,938	3,149	90,139		1825	17,664,033
1835	31,252		96,322	127,574	1835	23,731,175
	11 to 12,000				Average of ten years, about - - - £900,000	

3. ISLE BOURBON : —									
1717	900	-	-	1,000	2,000	1825	7,620,590		
1767	5,197	-	-	20,379	25,576	1835	16,134,257		
1801	16,000			64,000	80,000	Average of ten years,			
1837	39,817			69,513	109,330	about - - - -		£560,000	
4. GUIANA : —									
1740	566	54		4,634	5,274	1775	488,598		
1775	-	1,300		8,000	9,000	1790	531,853		
1790	2,000	520		12,000	14,520	1825	2,603,223		
1835	1,100	5,656		16,705	23,361	1835	2,679,259		
						Average of ten years,			
						about - - - -		£90,000	
						Total average of ten			
						years, from 1825 to			
						1835 - - - -		£2,950,000	

Sugar produced.	
1835	Martinique 30,388,850 kilogr.
1835	Guadaloupe 36,524,241
1836	Bourbon 25,042,936
1836	Guiana 2,314,796
94,280,823 about 1,850,000 cwt.	



## LECTURE III.

BRIEF HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BRITISH COLONIZATION. WEST INDIES. NORTH AMERICAN COLONIES, DOWN TO THE PERIOD OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION.

THE colonial history of Britain presents a prospect so wide and so diversified ; it is so rich in great enterprises and strange events ; so abundant in economical lessons, and carries our attention from point to point over so vast a portion of the surface of the earth, that selection and compression appear almost equally difficult. A mere catalogue of the provinces inhabited by British colonists, with a geographical description of each, would completely exhaust the time of my hearers without much advantage ; and therefore, in order to impress a few prominent features of the subject on your attention, I must solicit your indulgence for much unavoidable omission. My object will chiefly be to indicate those facts which will be of value as examples, which may serve as tests of doctrines hereafter to be considered, as indications of a policy to be recommended or to be avoided. Wherever, therefore, we pause for a few moments in our rapid course, we shall probably on a future occasion find it necessary to return.

The general policy of England towards her colonies, down to the period of American independence, is no where so ably developed as in the masterly sketch contained in the seventh chapter of the fourth book of Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*. True, he wrote against a theory, and his facts are collected and arranged with a view to his argument ; and since that theory was supported by the popular opinion of his times, Adam

Smith, although in point of fact he did not carry out his refutation so far as he might have done, was regarded as an ingenious but dangerous speculator. But now that almost every proposition he has stated, and every prediction he has hazarded, have been borne out by abundant experience — that he can be shown to have been wrong only where he hesitated to push his own views far enough, and borrowed something from the logic of his antagonists—his very wisdom wears a common-place aspect, and is sometimes neglected as too trivial for the present day. I know not, however, where the student can turn in order to find the same clearness of statement and judicious application of instances, united with the same vigour of reasoning.

Generally speaking, the oldest colonies of England were founded by private adventurers at their own expense and risk. The soil was commonly vested in proprietors, that is, it was granted by wholesale, provinces on the continent, islands in the ocean, to powerful individuals or to companies of “undertakers,” and by them regranted to emigrants, usually on payment of a quit rent. Where, however, the emigrants had established themselves prior to the grant, or where they contrived to set aside and disregard the grant, they divided the land among themselves pretty much at their own pleasure. And such settlements increased more rapidly than those in which the proprietors contrived to establish their rights. The right of government, as well as the soil, was usually conceded to the proprietors in the first instance; they were connected by little more than a nominal recognition of sovereignty with the crown of Great Britain. But the disputes between the colonists and the proprietors, except in a very few cases, caused the dissolution of the proprietary government, and threw the colonies one by one into the hands of the crown.

They were then usually administered by a governor sent from England ; with a mimic parliament, consisting of an upper house or council, nominated generally by the governor, and a house of assembly elected by the people, in which originated all taxation. But laws enacted in these assemblies required, besides the assent of the governor, the ratification of the king in council. The governor's council acted likewise as a species of senate, to assist him in his executive, and sometimes in his judicial duties. Such has been the outline of the colonial system of government in almost all our numerous dependencies, except those acquired by conquest, which have usually been governed at least for a time in a more absolute manner, and except the chartered colonies of North America, of which I shall have occasion to speak at a future time. Thus the early colonists from England grew up from the beginning in a spirit of independence and self-reliance ; and instead of parting with a portion of his rights when he settled in a distant dependency, the emigrant felt that he breathed a freer air than that of the land he had relinquished. The trade of all the older settlements was perfectly free at the outset, and in the seventeenth century it fell almost wholly into the hands of the Dutch, at that time the great carriers of Europe. This occasioned the acts of navigation, the basis of our commercial policy towards our colonies, the first of which was passed under the Commonwealth in 1651. No commodities of the growth of Asia, Africa, or America, were thenceforth to be imported into England, or her colonies, except in English vessels ; and such as were the growth of Europe, only in English vessels or vessels of the country from whence they were imported.

The principles of these Acts were twofold : as regards the mother country generally, the main object was to

monopolise the carrying trade for our own shipowners. Their consequences in this point of view will only fall incidentally under our notice. As regards the colonies, their immediate effect, aided as they were by other regulations, on which I have not time now to dilate, was to restrict the market for their exportable produce. Such commodities as were termed "enumerated," could only be carried from the colonies to England or her dependencies. However, this restriction was in process of time much modified. Grain, lumber, and fish, the produce of North America, were never among the "enumerated articles;" rum and sugar were omitted from the list in 1731, and could afterwards be exported to all parts of the world, provided it were in English vessels. England next imposed high protecting duties, amounting in some important instances to absolute exclusion on the production of foreign colonies, in favour of those of her own; some of which were also encouraged by bounties. Lastly, to complete her colonial system, she prohibited the colonies from carrying on various branches of manufacture for themselves, and placed foreign manufactured goods, imported into the colonies, under the same duties to which they were liable in the mother country; which last restriction was not carried into effect until the year 1763.

It was thus by slow degrees only that the colonies were brought, both as to their commerce and their internal affairs, under regular government and subordination, in which they continued until the attempt to reduce those of North America to more complete subjection, by taxing them without their own consent, occasioned their separation from the mother country. This great event, and the results of the late war, which have placed under our government a great number of the dependencies of other countries, have much changed

the character of our colonial relations. For the colonies of British origin which remained to us on the continent, such as Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, founded not by adventurers but under government superintendence, had at first no constitution of their own. And the numerous conquered countries were wholly under absolute government, a thing quite contrary to the genius of our old colonial system, as well as to the spirit of British institutions. Such a contrast could not long continue. Constitutions have been granted to Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland, and the Mauritius, similar to those under which our older colonies had flourished. But the contrast between the working of institutions coeval with a people and rooted in their original habits, and institutions granted to societies brought up on a different system, was never more strongly exemplified than it has been in some of those instances. With regard to commercial affairs, a singular change has likewise taken place. Great Britain has gradually engrossed (whether through or in spite of the navigation laws, it is not now necessary to consider) the greatest share of the carrying trade of the world. She has likewise become by far the greatest of manufacturing nations. Consequently mutual restrictions, such as those imposed by the ancient system on the producers of the mother country and the colony, for the supposed benefit of each other, have now become very little more than restrictions on one of the contracting parties only. We might draw many articles of raw produce cheaper and better from other countries than from our colonies; therefore, so long as their produce is protected, we are taxed for their benefit. But it may be questioned, whether any of the commodities they require from Europe, except some few articles which we do not and cannot produce, could be obtained by them cheaper or better from any other source than from ourselves. Con-

sequently they are no longer taxed for ours, except in one or two unimportant particulars. When the navigation laws, as far as regards the colonies, were greatly modified in 1824, no great change or disturbance of the colony trade ensued. Things had found of themselves that level, which those laws were intended to maintain artificially. It is impossible to conceive a more direct contrast than that which exists between the British colonial policy of late years and that of our ancestors. They cared for the most part little or nothing about the internal government of their colonies, and kept them in subjection in order to derive certain supposed commercial advantages from them. We give *them* commercial advantages, and tax ourselves for their benefit, in order to give them an interest in remaining under our supremacy, that we may have the pleasure of governing them.

The West Indian colonies of England, the oldest transatlantic possessions of her crown, deserve our first attention. "These possessions" (says a writer in the *Quarterly Review* for 1822) "are the most important instance of the national monopoly prescribed by the colonial policy, and as this has been adhered to with steady perseverance, they present a fair contrast with opposite modes of government. If the tests of facts and experience might be appealed to for the influence of these different systems of administration upon public wealth, the instance of these colonies might be triumphantly brought forward by the advocates of a restricted intercourse." The advocates of that system in the present day would, I suspect, strongly object to having it tested by the result of the experiment in the West Indies. But we will endeavour to let facts speak for themselves, and reserve theories for a separate discussion. The oldest colony founded by the English in the West Indies is Barbadoes, which was first settled

in 1624, but granted by patent to the Earl of Carlisle as sole proprietor in 1627. Its early prosperity arose from the emigration of men of the better classes, chiefly royalists, during the civil wars. The claims of the proprietor were soon forgotten; the governors appointed by him granted land to whom they pleased on receiving a gratuity for themselves; and the rights of the proprietor and his heirs were effectually set aside through the impossibility of enforcing them, although they furnished the crown after the Restoration with a pretext for obtaining from the assembly of the island the famous duty of  $4\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. on exported sugars, which was afterwards extended to various other islands. The extraordinary prosperity to which Barbadoes attained in a few years after its first occupation has been often described, and, doubtless, with some features of exaggeration. This little island, no larger than the Isle of Wight, is said to have contained in 1650, 50,000 white and 100,000 black inhabitants, and to have given employment to 400 sail of 60,000 tons, and this before the commencement of the cultivation of sugar, which was not introduced until 1670. It is said also that Charles II. after his restoration conferred baronetcies on thirteen of the principal royalists of Barbadoes, some of whom were worth even in those times more than 10,000*l.* a year, and none less than 1000*l.* The great sources of this prosperity were, the freedom of the legitimate trade, then chiefly carried on in Dutch vessels, and the extension of the privateering or contraband trade with the Spanish settlements. The first of these was effectually checked by the Navigation Acts; intended, as Blackstone has observed, to punish the royalist planters, and clip the wings of the Dutch. But a more powerful cause of decline was doubtless to be found in the exhaustion of the soil after the first years of its cultivation.

Antigua was colonized from Barbadoes about 1670. The great island of Jamaica was wrested from the Spaniards under the commonwealth; and, after some difficulties at the outset, soon shot rapidly ahead of the other British colonies, and, until the rise of St. Domingo, of all the European possessions in the Gulf of Mexico. The other islands were conquered at different periods from the French and other nations.

The early settlers who occupied in such numbers the soil of the Antilles, seem to have been chiefly small proprietors, who lived on the produce of their estates. When the cultivation of sugar was introduced about 1670, the free white population rapidly diminished, and continued to do so for a century afterwards. The whites in Barbadoes are said to have increased until they amounted about 1670 to 70,000; but these early calculations must be received with doubt: in 1724 there were only 18,000, there are now 16,000. Antigua contained 5000 in the reign of Charles II., now only 2500. The history of the other Windward Islands \* is precisely similar. Jamaica, from its extent of surface, and fitness for a variety of productions, did not present the same diminution; yet even there the number of whites remained stationary at about 8000 from 1670 to 1720. This declining condition of the white population, showing how unsuited these islands were to become, what their first occupiers imagined they would, the scenes of extensive colonization from Europe, chiefly

\* I here use the term, "Windward Islands," in the sense given to it by Spanish rather than English navigators. As it is often very loosely employed, a short explanation may be useful.

The Spaniards call Cuba, Jamaica, St. Domingo, Portorico, and their immediate dependencies, "Sotovento" or Leeward; the remainder "Barlovento" or Windward, from the current of air, which generally sets from the eastward. But in English and nautical language, the "Windward Islands" are only those from the Spanish main northward to Martinico inclusive; the remainder are called "Leeward."—*Arrowsmith's Map of the West Indies.*



proceeded from the monopoly of land, consequent on the cultivation of sugar. As I mentioned in a former lecture, it was found that the small proprietor could not compete with the large one, in raising this staple product. Coffee, and still more sugar, requires a number of hands, and the simultaneous application of much labour at particular seasons. Thus this species of agriculture resembles in some respects a manufacture; and, as in manufactures, the large capitalists have great advantages. "To make ten hogsheads of sugar" says the author of a report on the present state of the French sugar islands, in the *Statistical Journal of Paris*\*, "needs nearly the same expenditure in beasts of burthen, mills, utensils, &c. as to make a hundred. A property of less than fifty arpens cannot be used as a sugar plantation." This tendency of things was increased when, by the improvidence of the early cultivators, particularly in Barbadoes, the soil was exhausted, and greater expence and labour became necessary to raise the same amount of produce. Hence all accounts of our West Indian colonies, in the first half of the last century, teem with complaints of the decay of small proprietors, and the consolidation of all the classes of society into two, the wealthy planters and the slaves. "The great stocks, and the running into a staple which required them," says Burke in 1758, "have by degrees devoured the island (Jamaica). It is the nature of vast stocks to create a kind of monopoly; and it is the nature of monopoly to aim at great profits from a comparatively little produce. Indigo was once very greatly produced in Jamaica, and it enriched the island to such a degree, that in the parish of Vere, where this drug was cultivated, they are said to have had no less than 300 gentlemen's coaches — a number I do not imagine

\* Vol. ii. p. 123.

“even the whole island exceeds at this day ; and there  
“is great reason to believe that there were many more  
“persons of property in Jamaica formerly than there  
“are now, though perhaps they had not those vast for-  
“tunes which dazzle us in a manner at present.” To  
this unwholesome state of society succeeded one in some  
respects still worse ; the wealthier planters themselves  
began to abandon our islands, and fix their residence at  
home. They were soon regarded by the other classes  
of whites as factories, where a man was to make his  
fortune in order to leave them as soon as he could af-  
ford it. This change from residence to absenteeism in  
slave colonies is partly a consequence of the progress of  
riches, as has been already observed ; but in those of  
England it has been carried to excess by causes peculiar  
to the nation ; and I am certain that those causes rather  
do credit than disgrace to the English character, how-  
ever unnatural such a system may appear. Notwith-  
standing the instances to the contrary, which the Spanish  
islands are said to exhibit, it may be doubted whether  
the slaves of small proprietors are not on the whole  
liable to be harder worked and worse treated than the  
members of numerous gangs under the regular disci-  
pline of a plantation. And the distaste which English-  
men began to evince, as civilization and right feeling  
made progress among them, to the mode of life of slave  
colonies, its deep-rooted hard-heartedness and profligacy,  
is a trait of which we ought to be rather proud than  
ashamed. The Spaniards live and multiply in slave  
colonies, because they have no high value for civilization  
and no turn for enterprize ; the white man, secured by  
his privileges of caste, cares little whether in outward  
circumstances he approximates to the condition of the  
coloured classes among whom he dwells. The French,  
industrious and civilized, have perhaps less of that moral

sense of aversion to the habits, both of barbarism and slavery, which our people appear to exhibit ; and live more contentedly in the midst of them : they are repugnant to every taste and cherished feeling of the Englishman. If it be asked, what is to be thought of the morality of those whose fastidiousness shrank from contact with such a state of society, and yet who had no objection to enjoy the wealth derived from so impure a source, I fear that we can only shelter ourselves under the general apology of the inconsistency of human nature. But the fact remains the same ; and it is not therefore altogether to be regretted, that the race of Englishmen has not thriven and multiplied in our West India colonies. In Barbadoes, where the whites, although so much diminished, still form a numerous body, the condition of the lowest class of them is described by observers as very degraded : without property, and raised by their colour above the debasement of labour, they are said to subsist in a great measure on charity, administered not unfrequently by the Negroes themselves.

However, while our smaller islands increased their production but slowly, Jamaica, under this system of cultivation in large plantations, became in the eighteenth century the greatest sugar growing country in the world. Its prosperity during a great part of it was surprising, although seriously interrupted at various times by natural and political vicissitudes ; by hurricanes, scarcities, and slave rebellions, of which no less than twenty are enumerated before the year 1795 ; so utterly unfounded is the notion that the Negroes were first stimulated to discontent by the proceedings of philanthropists in England. During all this time our sugar islands had the monopoly of the English market ; and so large was that market, and so high the English prices, that when they were permitted to export direct to foreign countries, it was found that

very little such exportation took place, Britain and her colonies absorbing nearly all that the islands could raise at a profit. But the monopoly did not secure them from feeling severely the effects of the extraordinary progress of the French sugar colonies already adverted to, and of the American war, which deprived them of their continental customers, who, when freed from commercial restrictions, went to the cheapest market. The complaints of the West Indians cannot be said to have begun from this period—they had been inherited by one generation of planters from another, along with their estates, ever since the plantations began; but after the American war, the evils complained of became more inveterate, and from that time to this the notes of distress have been continually poured forth by men conscious of the uneasiness and loss which was inevitably entailed on them by the forced nature of their trade, but never attributing it to the right cause, and crying out for more monopoly, in order to redress those evils which monopoly itself inflicted.

In some points, indeed, they have really felt themselves aggrieved; for they have been placed under several injurious restrictions, as if to counterbalance the protection given them in our markets. Such have been the restrictions on the importation of provisions and lumber from any other quarter than Britain and her colonies—at first absolute, modified in 1796, and again in 1825 and 1831, but not yet abolished.\* The economical effect of these regulations will be considered elsewhere: but one remarkable fact in West Indian history may be briefly noticed as we pass. When the United States became independent, government resolved on transferring this branch of trade, then enjoyed by them, to our re-

\* Mr. Labouchère's motion on this subject is still pending, as these sheets go through the press.

maining colonies—Canada, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland; but these were at that time utterly unable to supply the quantity of necessaries required by the West Indies. In vain did the planters press this circumstance on the consideration of parliament and the privy council. In vain did they state most truly, that this was a question *de vitâ et sanguine*, and not of mere commercial expediency; that the very subsistence of their Negroes depended upon their commerce with the United States. Selfish principles of policy, and a paltry desire of vengeance upon our revolted subjects, prevailed over every better counsel. It so happened that for many years together, from 1780 to 1786, the islands were visited with an unusual succession of those terrible hurricanes to which they are subject. Their provision crops, to the cultivation of which the planters had begun to resort in the crippled state of their import trade, were destroyed. A frightful scarcity ensued. According to a statement in the work of Bryan Edwards \*, 15,000 Negroes perished in seven years in Jamaica alone, in consequence of the restrictions on the supply from America. You have probably often heard of the hard-heartedness of political economists, and advocates of free trade; I wish that those who are in the habit of employing this current phrase would study the history of the sufferings which the spirit of commercial jealousy has brought upon mankind, and honestly determine where the charge of hard-heartedness most properly applies.

This prohibition, as I have said, was modified in 1796. The destruction of St. Domingo about the same time, rid our West India islands of their most formidable rival. The events of the war still farther strengthened their monopoly. One by one the tropical

\* Book vii. c. 4.

colonies of other nations fell into our hands ; and as their productions were excluded from continental markets by the blockade, and from ours by the protecting duties, they fell into a state of great distress. Never, in short, was monopoly maintained under such advantageous circumstances. It is true that the British government, pressed by the necessities of the war, continued to impose higher and higher duties on West Indian produce ; but the consumption increased notwithstanding. Although the English consumers had to pay at least double the price to the producer, which they would have had to pay under a natural system of trade ; and, in addition, a duty to government nearly equal to the original price ; yet the use of the commodities thus enormously enhanced in the market continued to augment — one of the most astonishing proofs of the high prosperity of the empire, during the greater part of that protracted contest.

If therefore any period can be selected more peculiarly favourable to the West Indies, under the system of protection which we have adopted towards them, it is that of the late war : and yet, strange to say, not only did the grievances of the planters continue to be put forward almost through the whole of it, but facts were occasionally brought before the public which seemed to prove the fallacious nature of the prosperity which they were supposed to enjoy. The report of the West India Committee for 1801 stated, that a return of 10 per cent. on capital was necessary to give the planter a “living” profit ; and yet, that the returns had not averaged one third of that amount per annum. Surely these circumstances (and many more might be adduced) go some way towards establishing by evidence the inevitable unsoundness of a trade created and defended by prohibitions.

In 1812 the slave-trade was abolished by Great Britain. It cannot be denied that this measure of justice and humanity had in one respect the result which its enemies predicted, and its friends refused to anticipate : it rendered the cost of production in slave countries greater. In old and fully peopled colonies it was found that the supply of labour might indeed be maintained without importation ; but then in these the limits of production, under the existing system of slave cultivation, were already reached, and the land was becoming less valuable. And in the other class of colonies, those which possessed an abundance of fertile soil, and were chiefly of recent acquisition, those to which economists looked for fresh and abundant supplies, the abolition of the trade rendered it impossible to extend cultivation ; for the slave population, taken generally, was found unable to maintain its own number, still more to increase. This melancholy fact is undeniable. In the middle of the last century it was computed, that out of 80,000 Negroes in Barbadoes, 5000 perished annually. The mortality of later times has not been so great ; but the deaths in most of the islands have regularly exceeded the births. Bryan Edwards stated the decrease at  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. per annum. Jamaica had, in 1817, 346,000 slaves ; in 1829, 322,000 ; Trinidad, in 1816, 26,000 ; in 1831, 21,000 ; Dominica, in 1817, 18,000 ; in 1826, 15,000 ; and so on of the rest : in Barbadoes alone there has been, in this century, a slight increase. Manumissions, never very numerous in our colonies, went but a little way towards accounting for the difference. Nor has there been of late years any of that disproportion between the sexes to which it was at first attributed ; and yet the decrease steadily continued. Climate and treatment, and neglect of marriage, and various other causes, have been assigned for it with more or less probability. But the effect has undoubtedly been, as

I before mentioned, to lay our settlements at a disadvantage as compared with those countries which still enjoy the miserable superiority of the slave-trade.

But the check thus given to West Indian enterprize was felt much less by the planters than by the public of Great Britain. When the slave-trade was abolished, the cost of producing sugar in Jamaica was already, perhaps, twice as great as in Cuba. Therefore, even with the slave-trade, they could not have maintained a competition with the growers of other countries in any market where they were not defended by prohibitions. As I have already had occasion to mention, a virgin soil, in almost all agriculture, but especially that of the tropics, is an advantage which no accumulation of capital and no improvement in science and skill seem able to counterbalance ; and the necessary decline of our West India islands has been long foreseen by foreign observers, though not always readily admitted by ourselves. “ A concurrence of circumstances,” says Heeren, “ has made these hothouses prosper : those, however, have changed ; and those happy times have gone by, probably for ever.” “ It is easy to foresee\*,” said the most sagacious of observers, Humboldt, forty years ago, “ that the small Antilles, notwithstanding their favourable commercial position, will not be able to maintain competition with the continental colonies, if these last continue to apply themselves with the same ardour as at present to the cultivation of sugar, coffee, and cotton. In the physical as in the moral world, every thing eventually falls into the order prescribed by nature ; and if a few little spots, of which the aboriginal inhabitants were exterminated, have carried on up to this time a more active trade in their productions than the

\* *Nouv. Espagne*, vol. iii. p. 177.



“neighbouring continent, it is only because the inhabitants of Cumana, Caraccas, New Grenada, and Mexico, have begun very late to profit by the immense advantages which nature has given them.” The immediate realisation of these views was prevented by the revolution in those countries—another stroke of good fortune for the West Indians ; but other regions, possessed of equal advantages, have taken their places in the race.

There remained, therefore, for our planters only the home market ; and that was secured to them by prohibition. The British consumer thus took upon himself the loss, whatever it was, consequent on the increased difficulty of production occasioned by the abolition of the slave-trade. The price of sugar might rise ; but he alone would suffer directly by it ; and without a doubt the price of sugar would have risen, perhaps, to an intolerable amount, had it not been for the new competition of the East Indies, Demerara, the Mauritius, and other conquered colonies, placed after the peace on the footing of the old English possessions. To this new rivalry, therefore, far more than to the abolition, the planter of Jamaica or Barbadoes might be justified in attributing his own diminished prosperity.\*

In the twenty-two years which elapsed between the abolition of the slave-trade and the abolition of slavery, the decline of production in most of the older West India islands was constant and serious. The sugar exported from Jamaica in 1805, the year of the largest crop known, was 137,906 hogsheads ; in 1811, 127,751 ; in 1833, 78,375. In these the cost of production was continually increasing, although slowly, from the exhaustion of land and the dearness of negro labour with-

\* See Appendix, Nos. I.—III., to the present lecture, in which an endeavour is made to trace the progress of the principal British West India colonies compared with that of some foreign settlement, in population, trade, and production.

out importation ; in those in which the soil was newer, the latter cause, as we have seen, restricted the spread of cultivation, and prevented any extensive increase of produce. The consequence was, that while the population of the British empire was rapidly increasing, the total produce of her western sugar colonies, which have fertile soil enough to supply the world, remained stationary. In 1814 our import from our West Indian plantations was 3,581,516 cwt.; in 1833, 3,648,026 cwt.\* And a constant diminution has been going on in the consumption of this most agreeable and nutritious article by the British people. We are still the greatest consumers of sugar in the world ; but the quantity used by each individual among us, on the average, is scarcely more than half what it was forty years ago.† Mr. M'Gregor is of opinion, that while the average consumption of sugar in England is greater than on the continent, it is much less among the poorer classes, owing to the high price. ‡

Under these circumstances the great measure of the abolition of slavery took place. Nothing can be farther from my thoughts than to detract from the merit of that crowning measure, almost a solitary instance, in the history of many centuries, of a national act of disinterested self-denial. To be the citizen of the state which has accomplished it, is to my feelings a higher title of distinction, than to be the countryman of the conquerors of the East, or of the commercial sovereigns of the West. But now that both the violent prejudices and the sanguine hopes which obscured the view of the

\* M'Culloch, Dict. of Commerce, p. 1091.

† According to the estimate of Mr. Montgomery Martin, in his evidence before the Committee on Free Trade with India, every inhabitant of Great Britain (including Ireland) consumed, in 1801, 440 ounces of sugar annually; in 1811, 429; in 1821, 333; in 1831, 358; now only 256.—See *Colon. Mag.* vol. iii. p. 95.

‡ Evidence before Committee on Import Duties, 1840.

ablest politicians at the time when that act was performed have passed in some measure away, we may, I think, perceive, with a little attention, that emancipation, although of the highest importance in a moral and political point of view, will not, and cannot in the nature of things produce any very great revolution in the economical progress of events, unless, indeed, by laying the seeds of some great future changes, of which no eye as yet sees even the beginning. It is evident that the real blow was struck, I will not say at the prosperity of our sugar colonies, but at the system under which they had grown up, when the slave-trade was abolished. It was the confident hope of the advocates of that measure, that it would improve the economical prospects of the colonies : they were unfortunately deceived, as we have seen. With a free trade in slaves, our planters might have struggled on, under a vicious and wretched system, no doubt ; but still their monopoly might have been maintained. Without it, that system must have come to ruin : sooner or later this country must have gone elsewhere for the supply of those increasing wants, which their cramped energies could not meet. Emancipation, taken at the worst, can only have brought this inevitable result a little nearer ; taken at the best, it may have laid the foundation of a new and more solid edifice of colonial prosperity ; it may have given a turn to the course of events, and opened for our magnificent tropical empire of the West a new cycle of destiny.

These prospects, and the state of our colonies under the operation of the recent change, will form the subject of future discussion. But before we pass onwards, let us pause for a moment to reflect on the remarkable uniformity with which events have succeeded each other in the economical history of the West Indies in general. At each epoch in that history we see the same causes

producing almost identical effects. The opening of a fresh soil, with freedom of trade, gives a sudden stimulus to settlement and industry ; the soil is covered with free proprietors, and a general but rude prosperity prevails. Then follows a period of more careful cultivation, during which estates are consolidated, gangs of slaves succeed to communities of freemen, the rough commonwealth is formed into a most productive factory. But fertility diminishes ; the cost of production augments : slave labour, always dear, becomes dearer by the increased difficulty of supporting it : new settlements are occupied, new sources of production opened : the older colonies, unable to maintain a ruinous competition, even with the aid of prohibitions, after a period of suffering and difficulty, fall back into a secondary state, in which capital, economy, and increased skill, make up, to a certain extent only, for the invaluable advantages which they have lost. Thus we have seen the Windward Islands maintaining at one period a numerous white population ; afterwards, importing numerous slaves, and supplying almost all the then limited consumption of Europe. We have seen Jamaica rise on their decay, and go through precisely the same stages of existence. We have seen how St. Domingo, in its turn, greatly eclipsed Jamaica ; but St. Domingo was cut off by a sudden tempest, and never attained to the period of decline. Lastly, we have seen the Spanish colonies of Cuba and Portorico, after so many centuries of comparative neglect and rude productiveness, start all at once into the first rank among exporting countries, and flourish like the exuberant crops of their own virgin soil, while our islands, still rich in capital, but for the most part exhausted in fertility and deficient in labour, were struggling by the aid of their accumulated wealth against the encroaching principle of decay. The life of artificial and antisocial

communities may be brilliant for a time ; but it is necessarily a brief one, and terminates either by rapid decline, or still more rapid revolution, when the laboriously constructed props of their wealth give way, as they sometimes do, in sudden ruin.

According to an article in M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, the consumption of sugar by European nations in 1833, the last year of slavery in the British islands, amounted to 560,000 tons, of which the English West India colonies furnished 190,000, the Mauritius 30,000, the East Indies 60,000, Cuba and Porto-rico 110,000, Brazil 75,000, other European colonies 95,000.\*

It is gratifying to turn from the history of these territories, impressed from the beginning with the curse of vicious and unnatural institutions, to that of our continental possessions in America, where slavery was long unknown, and never became, except in one or two districts, a prevailing feature in society until after their emancipation. But the history of the foundation of those colonies is rendered so complicated by the conflicting claims of proprietors and merchant adventurers, the separation of provinces, the abandonment of old settlements and establishment of new ones, that it is impossible to do more than refer to a few of its leading incidents. The forms of government under which our different colonies in it (America) were originally placed, are reducible under three heads:—1. Royal governments; in which there was a legislative assembly, consisting of a lower house of representatives and an upper house or council, nominated by the governor, as already mentioned, which prevailed in Virginia and the southern provinces, and is now the only kind of constitution

\* This statement differs considerably from one in the "Companion to the Almanack for 1841." — See Appendix, No. III., to this lecture.

known in our foreign possessions. 2. Proprietary governments ; in which the proprietor, or company of proprietors, enjoyed the right, exercised in the former sort by the king, of nominating a council, and sometimes the governor also. Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland, long remained under this species of constitution. 3. Charter governments ; in which the sovereign had parted with his rights, wholly or partially, to the colonist ; in which both houses were elective, and sometimes the governor also ; in short, democracies. These were established in New England. Virginia and Massachusetts' Bay were the two original foundations from which the other colonies branched off by degrees. The first Virginian constitution was granted in 1606, a period when notions of prerogative ran high in England ; it was consequently favourable to arbitrary power. The property in the soil was vested in a company of merchant adventurers ; the government in two councils, a superior in England, and an inferior in the colony. This settlement was very slow in laying the foundation of its prosperity. It was twice ravaged by the Indians, and much distracted by intestine commotions. In 1612 the authorities appear to have thrown up the task of government, and martial law was proclaimed. In 1619 a representative assembly was first established, not in pursuance of any powers given in the charter, but by the free act of the colonists themselves ; and, in 1624, the company was dissolved. After that time its circumstances improved ; but the navigation laws, by cutting off the export of tobacco to Holland, nearly ruined Virginia, and produced an insurrection in 1663. The cavalier governor, Sir W. Berkeley, was defeated ; and the first example of the separation of a colony from the mother country would probably have been given to the world, had it not been for the opportune death of the chief

conspirator, Bacon. The subsequent political history of Virginia presents little that is remarkable; Maryland and the Carolinas were formed out of it, by grants to different proprietors.

The Massachusetts' Bay colony, the mother of all the New England states, had a very different development. The adventurers who obtained the first charter from Charles I., were schemers of a bold and designing character. He gave them the usual proprietary powers; and so little do his advisers appear to have understood the nature of the intended settlement, that it is remarkable that by the first patent the oath of supremacy was required to be administered to every settler. Armed with this patent, the proprietors rendered the colony a refuge for all the discontented spirits whom religious differences drove from the shores of England. Surmounting with extraordinary perseverance all the difficulties which attended the first settlements, these emigrants in 1621, according to some authorities, in violation of their patent, framed a constitution for themselves; according to others, the patent had never been enforced, and the settlers had been wholly left to their own devices. I do not know whether Washington Irving has any positive authority for the assertion that the Plymouth Fathers, on their first arrival, passed a resolution to abide by the laws of God until they had time to make new ones; but it is substantially true that they endeavoured to supply, by their strange notions of the polity of the Old Testament, the want of regular institutions, until these were framed according to circumstances. There is every reason to suppose that these whole proceedings took place with the consent and connivance of the proprietors in England. The advisers of Charles I. took the alarm rather late as to the character of the republic, which was thus establish-

ing itself beyond the Atlantic. He proceeded against the company by *quo warranto*. Their manifold breaches of their written engagements, undoubtedly afforded sufficient legal ground for the proceeding; still it was, under the circumstances, arbitrary, and added to the unpopularity of the unfortunate monarch. During the civil wars, the New England colonies so completely established their democracy, that Charles II. was bound to recognise it by his charters soon after the Restoration.

The principles of Penn's celebrated settlement are too well known to need explanation. His constitution resembled that of the other proprietary colonies: some of the later of these exhibited, however, curious attempts at Utopian legislation. Such was the constitution framed for Carolina by Locke, an aristocracy of ranks, with the romantic titles of landgraves, caciques, &c.; and a house of assembly, consisting of a single chamber, divided into estates after the German fashion. It is remarkable, that the philosopher's colony seems to have been the only one founded before the eighteenth century, except Virginia, in which the church of England was expressly established; but this clause is said to have been introduced against his will. Such was that framed by Oglethorpe for Georgia, with a contrivance for the descent of estates to male heirs, under feudal liabilities of defence. None of these complicated schemes answered. Plain and practical institutions seem peculiarly necessary for new settlements. It is a remark, not without truth in some of its applications, that the foundation of a colony is like the foundation of a house: you may throw in at first loose stones, and any kind of rubbish; the finished elevation must follow afterwards.

The disposal of lands was never under any systematic regulation in our early colonies. The first settlers cultivated the cleared ground about their villages in



common, not so much from any religious opinions, as from their circumstances, and the influence of habits not then wholly extinct in England itself; for we find this custom prevailing up to 1619 in Virginia, where no Puritans were established. When the soil was vested in proprietaries, it was more commonly granted at a quit-rent, as has been already observed, than sold; and the freehold was acquired in time by sale, or abandonment on the part of the proprietary.

The difficulty of procuring labour was severely felt. It was gradually obviated in the southern colonies by the introduction of slaves. The transportation of convicts to the plantations, although it continued for many years, was never large, and seems to have had little or no effect on the general habits of the people. The idea of penal colonies is more modern. But the favourite resource, especially where slavery was repugnant to the morals of the people and to the habits of the climate, was the labour of indented servants. These were bound in England to masters in the colonies, whom they served for a limited period. The plan was a bad one in many respects. In the first place it led to an odious system of misrepresentation, and even of kidnapping, practised by the managers of the trade in England. In the next place, it was next to impossible to hold an indented servant to his bond. When a planter had been at much expense in procuring servants of this description, his neighbour would often entice them away by higher wages, which he was the better enabled to give through the very circumstances that he had not shared in the expense of importing them. Few therefore obtained any command of free labour; and, except in the slave colonies, estates were almost uniformly scattered and small; and towns increased so slowly, that the largest in British America,

Boston, had not more than 25,000 inhabitants when the revolutionary war broke out, 150 years after its foundation.

The trade of the North American colonies was not, perhaps, much affected in the long run by the navigation acts. The prohibition to manufacture for themselves, was a prohibition to do that which, on a large scale, nature itself had forbidden them to do, by calling them to the more profitable occupation of agriculture. The restriction to the use of English manufactures could not, except in a few articles, subject them to much extra expense. They were at last free to export their own grain, fish, and lumber, to foreign countries in general; although some difficulties had, as we have seen, been originally thrown in the way of their foreign commerce.

Thus, with rapid and unobserved progress, they had grown into an empire, when the British government, by insisting on the right of taxation, lost the supremacy over them. It is a common opinion among those who are attached to British institutions, that it would have been better for the Americans to have retained their connection with the mother country, and thus avoided the evils of democracy. But what was their condition before the Revolution? They had no aristocracy, and, except in one considerable province, no established church, for the branch once planted in Virginia had fallen into decay. Granting, therefore, all the importance of these elements of social life, it is difficult to see what the provincials lost by the separation. It must be contended, to establish this point, that England must and would have retraced her steps, and forced her own institutions on her subject continent by the bayonet. It is not worth while to waste a thought on specula-

tions resting on so chimerical a basis. Sufficient for reasonable politicians to rejoice that the struggle was, after all, attended with so little of permanent loss or injury to either party; that the institutions of the mother country emerged uninjured from the strife of opinion which then accompanied the shock of arms; and that the republic herself, dubious and lowering as her prospects are judged by some, has shown sufficient innate vigour to encounter those varieties of untried being which she may probably experience.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE III.

## No. I.

PROGRESS of the principal Sugar-growing Colonies of the West Indies, from the beginning of this century to the period of Emancipation.

Years.	Cuba.			Portorico.		
	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling.	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling.
1800	250,000?	120,000?	1,000,000	150,000	13,000	15,000
1810	-	-	1,756,000	165,000	17,000	46,000
1815	340,000	190,000	2,000,000	180,000	19,000	111,000
1825	380,000	270,000	1,818,000	250,000	30,000	
1830	420,000	300,000	3,555,000	300,000	34,000	760,000
1835	450,000	350,000		315,000	42,000	850,000

Years.	Jamaica.			Barbadoes.		
	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling. Off. Val.	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling. Off. Val.
1800	40,000?	300,000		18,000	70,000	400,000?
1810	-	313,000	4,303,337	21,000	62,000	
1815	-	315,000		-	77,000	
1825	-	330,000	3,700,000	19,000	80,000	859,452
1830	-	320,000	3,450,000	19,000	81,000	776,695
1835	70,000?	Apprentices. 312,000	Decl. Val. 3,094,513	21,000	Apprentices. 83,000	Decl. Val. 578,739

Years.	Trinidad.			British Guiana.		
	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling.	Free.	Slaves.	Exports in Pounds Sterling.
1815	12,800	25,000		-	102,000	
1820	17,700	23,000	350,000	-	100,000	1,700,000
1825	18,300	24,000	400,000	7,500	92,000	1,530,000
1830	19,600	21,000	199,000	11,200	86,000	2,130,000
1835	22,300	Apprentices 20,000	370,363	-	Apprentices. 86,000	1,771,167

\*.\* This table is compiled from various data given by Ramon de la Sagra, Turnbull, Flintner, and Montgomery Martin, and from the official tables. The sums given in round numbers are in general only approximative estimates.

## No. II.

## PRODUCTION OF SUGAR,

In Cwts.

Years.	Exports from West India Islands to Eng- land.	Exports from Jamaica.	Barbadoes.	Trinidad.	Guiana.	Mauritius and East India.	Cuba.	St. Domingo.	Years.
1722	...	157,000							
1739	...	473,000	297,000						
1750	915,000								
1768	...	784,000							
1774	2,000,000	910,000	...	...	...	...	...	800,000	1774
1785	...	1,212,000	145,000 ?	...	...	...	224,000		
1790	...	1,297,000	150,000 ?	...	...	...	278,000	1,300,000	1790
1795	...	1,954,000	...	...	...	...	400,000		1795
1800	2,400,000	1,496,000	160,000	...	...	...	730,000		1800
1805	...	2,138,000	...	...	...	...	640,000		1805
1810	...	1,580,000	...	...	...	...	660,000		1810
1815	3,381,000	1,593,000	196,000	154,000	340,000	126,000	750,000		1815
1820	3,833,000	1,769,000	180,000	156,000	574,000	277,000	900,000		1820
						Mauritius.		French Colonies.	
1825	3,795,000	1,115,000	278,000	189,000	708,000	94,000	1,200,000	—	1825
1830	3,942,000	1,379,000	337,000	205,000	891,000	486,000	1,500,000		1830
1835	3,524,000	1,149,000	345,000	289,000	887,000	550,000	2,200,000	1,850,000	1835
1839	...	790,000	350,000	245,000	520,000	604,000	2,500,000		1839

## No. III.

QUANTITIES of Sugar and Coffee produced in different parts of the World, according to an approximative estimate by Mr. M<sup>rs</sup> Queen. — From the *Companion to the Almanack* for 1841.

Colonies.	Sugar.	Coffee.
	cwts.	lbs.
British Sugar Colonies - - -	3,571,378*	10,769,655
British India - - -	519,126	6,245,028
Danish West Indies - - -	450,000	
Dutch ditto - - -	260,000	2,400,000
French Sugar Colonies - - -	2,160,000?	14,720,000
United States - - -	900,000	
Brazils - - -	2,400,000	134,000,000
Spanish West Indies - - -	4,481,342	49,840,000
Java (without distinction of quality) - - -	892,475	80,174,460
For internal consumption, exclusive of China, India, Siam, Java, and United States - - -	2,446,337	
Hayti - - -	-	43,007,522
Venezuela and Colombia - - -	-	11,544,024
Central America - - -	-	897,540
Mocha - - -	-	5,500,000
Total - - -	18,080,658	359,098,229

\* This seems underrated if the Mauritius be included.

## No. IV.

## WEST INDIES (British).\*

	Supposed Population, 1835.		1835.	
	White.	Coloured.	Exports.	Imports.
Antigua -	2,000	33,000	£226,860	£201,339
Jamaica -	35,000	380,000	3,094,513	2,018,965
Barbadoes -	16,000	88,000	578,739	505,028
Dominica -	840	20,000	45,625	50,056
Grenada -	800	27,000	204,796	114,129
Montserrat -	320	7,000	19,249	12,715
Nevis -	700	10,000	33,574	39,094
St. Kitt's -	1,600	21,000	120,141	110,337
St. Lucia -	1,070	17,000	79,872	51,807
Anguilla -	360	3,000		
St. Vincent -	1,300	25,000	326,677	130,559
Tobago -	450	14,000	104,274	58,705
Tortola, &c. -	500	7,000	23,214	9,338
Trinidad -	3,320	39,000	370,363	315,851
Bahamas -	4,150	12,000	108,925	125,425
Bermuda -	4,000	4,800	31,353	100,783
Honduras -	330	4,800		
Guiana -	3,500	100,000	1,771,167	711,139
Total - -	76,240	902,600	£7,139,342	£4,555,270

\* From Mr. M. Martin's British Colonies, with some alterations.

## No V.

## TRADE of the BRITISH WEST INDIES.

Years.	Official Value.		Declared Value.
	Imports from, to Great Britain.	Exports to, from Great Britain.	British Exports.
1700	£829,178	£334,194	
1725	1,364,011	363,756	
1750	1,515,824	546,545	
1775	3,627,881	1,717,229	
1800	7,369,287	4,087,112	
1810	8,258,173	4,790,143	
1820	8,353,606	4,561,350	£4,197,761
1830	8,599,100	4,040,677	2,838,448
Imports and Exports of 1837.—Declared Value.			
		Imports.	Exports.
Jamaica - - - - -		£1,956,540	£2,827,833
Barbadoes - - - - -		627,147	787,344
Imports and Exports of 1839.—Declared Value.			
		Imports.	Exports.
Trinidad - - - - -		£397,920	£424,343
Guiana - - - - -		1,303,900	1,300,430



## LECTURE IV.

PRESENT COLONIES OF GREAT BRITAIN IN NORTH AMERICA,  
THE CAPE, AND AUSTRALIA.

I SHALL, on a future occasion, call your attention more particularly to the political lessons to be derived from the history of our North American colonies and their great revolution, so far at least as I may do so without overstepping the limits of our province. At present we are concerned with that history only as an introduction to a general view of the condition of our existing colonies ; and, without expressing any general opinion as to the merits of the older or newer British colonial policy, let us see in what the distinction between them really lies.

The fundamental idea of the older British colonial policy appears to have been, that wherever a man went, he carried with him the rights of an Englishman, whatever these were supposed to be. In the reign of James I. the state doctrine was, that most popular rights were usurpations ; and the colonists of Virginia, sent out under the protection of government, were therefore placed under that degree of controul which the state believed itself authorised to exercise at home. The Puritans exalted civil franchise to a republican pitch ; their colonies were therefore republican ; there was no such notion as that of an intermediate state of tutelage, or semi-liberty. Hence the entire absence of solicitude, on the part of the mother country, to interfere with the internal government of the colonies, arose not altogether from neglect, but partly from principle. This is re-

markably proved by the fact, that representative government was seldom expressly granted in the early charters; *it was assumed by the colonists as a matter of right.* Thus, to use the odd expression of the historian of Massachusetts, "a house of burgesses broke out "in Virginia" in 1619 \*, almost immediately after its second settlement; and although the constitution of James contained no such element, it was at once acceded to by the mother country as a thing of course. No thought was ever seriously entertained of supplying the colonies with the elements of an aristocracy. Virginia was the only province of old foundation in which the Church of England was established; and there it was abandoned, with very little help, to the caprice or prejudices of the colonists, under which it speedily decayed. The Puritans enjoyed, undisturbed, their peculiar notions of ecclesiastical government. "It concerneth "New England always to remember that they were "originally a plantation religious, not a plantation of "trade. And if any man among us make religion as "twelve, and the world as thirteen, such an one hath "not the spirit of a true New Englandman." And when they chose to illustrate this noble principle by decimating their own numbers by persecution, and expelling from their limits all dissenters from their own establishment, the mother country never exerted herself to protect or prohibit. The only ambition of the state was to regulate the trade of its colonies; in this respect, and this only, they were fenced round with restrictions, and watched with the most vigilant jealousy. They had a right to self-government and self-taxation; a right to religious freedom in the sense which they chose themselves to put upon the word; a right to con-

\* Hutchinson's History of Massachusetts, p. 94.

struct their municipal polity as they pleased ; but no right to control or amend the slightest fiscal regulation of the imperial authority, however oppressively it might bear upon them.

Such, I say, were the general notions prevailing in England on the subject of colonial government, during the period of the foundation and early developement of our Transatlantic colonies — the notions by which the practice of government was regulated, although I do not assert that they were framed into a consistent and logical theory. Perhaps we shall not be far wrong in regarding Lord Chatham as the last distinguished assertor of these principles, in an age when they had begun to be partially superseded by newer speculations.

ὁ δ' ἄρα ὃ παῖδι ἔδωκε  
γῆρας, ἀλλ' οὐχ υἱὸς ἐν ἔντεσι πατρὸς ἐγῆρα.

The policy of Mr. Pitt's administration, and those of his successors, towards the colonies, was not only rendered materially different from those of former times by the effect of circumstances, but it was also influenced by a general change in the sentiments of statesmen and the public in this country. Higher doctrines with respect to the colonial supremacy of the mother country had begun to prevail before the American war, and had contributed towards the origin and maintenance of that unhappy conflict ; such, for example, as are developed in the famous pamphlet of Dr. Johnson, and in the speeches of parliamentary orators of the Grenville party. The American Revolution itself, and yet more the French, had the effect of casting a still deeper shade of unpopularity on democratic opinions ; and it is curious to observe how notions, which were really as old as the constitution, and had been practically followed out for ages in our colonial administration,

became dreaded and stigmatized as dangerous novelties, when they were advanced in the broad form of theories by French and American reformers.

And in our own times, the great modern change in political speculation, which has brought us in some respects far on the road towards democracy, has in others led by an obvious course to less liberal sentiments (in the vulgar sense of the word), than formerly prevailed. While the franchises of Englishmen were regarded under the vague notion of rights (for, long after logicians, such as Hobbes, had tested that notion, and shown its insufficiency, it retained its hold on the public mind), they were attached to his person, and travelled abroad with him to his new home. When all rights were made to rest on public utility, it became easy to contend, that what was expedient here might not be expedient there; those who were most attached to constitutional doctrines in the abstract, were able to hold that constitutions might be refused, or delayed, or modified, to suit the social character of different communities and their state of advancement — doctrines altogether repugnant, as I have said, to the very first premises of our early jurists and constitution-makers.

After the separation of the thirteen old provinces, England remained in possession of Nova Scotia, which had a constitution already, and of Canada and its dependencies; provinces which had been conquered from France, and possessed no constitutions of their own. Representative forms were gradually conceded to them; to Canada by Mr. Pitt's government in 1791, the immediate object of the measure being to attach the Canadians to the British government, in order to secure their aid against the people of the States, and also to exempt the inhabitants of British descent from the burden of French laws, under which they were subjected to

some oppressions \* ; to Upper Canada at the same time, on its separation from the lower province ; to New Brunswick when separated from Nova Scotia in 1785 ; to Newfoundland in 1832. In all these the frame and government is similar in the main to that of the old crown colonies, which has been already described. But the greater degree of controul which the mother country has exercised, both in the formation of these constitutions and in the internal arrangements of the colonies, may be estimated from various circumstances. The reservation of land by the authority of the mother state for the church establishment ; the controul exercised by the mother state over the sale of all other waste lands, perhaps the most important function of government in new countries : are altogether inconsistent with the principles of the founders of most of our old North American colonies. In some of these the people elected the governor himself ; in some, many of the executive functionaries ; in some, neither the crown nor the governor had any negative on the laws passed by the assemblies.† “ In the charter colonies, notwithstanding the cautious “ reference in the charters to the laws of England, the “ assemblies actually exercised the authority to abrogate “ every part of the common law, except that which “ united the colonies to the parent state by the general “ ties of allegiance and dependency, and every part of the “ statute law, except those acts of parliament which expressly prescribed rules for the colonies, and necessarily bound them, as integral parts of the empire, in “ a general system framed for all, and for the interest “ of all.” ‡

\* See Mr. Haliburton's Bubbles of Canada.

† In Connecticut and Rhode Island, which were to all intents democracies, united to the empire by allegiance only.

‡ Story on the Constitutions of the United States, i. 148.

Still more striking is the difference, when we regard the spread of our establishments in other parts of the world. The penal colonies afforded the first instance (a very necessary one, no doubt) of settlements founded by Englishmen without any constitution whatever. Since that time, the example has fructified. We have of late years seen the foundation of three different colonies, in which convicts are not admitted, and yet all of them governed, for the present, directly by the crown, with only a prospective provision for the future establishment of a constitutional system. This is a remarkable novelty in British policy.

Our North American empire occupies on the map an enormous extent of country, from the Bay of Fundy, the St. Lawrence, the Great Lakes, the Stony Mountains, and the river Columbia, to the distant shores of the Frozen Ocean. But the colonies established or conquered by us spread over a region forming only a small portion of these possessions : a portion not geographically compact in shape, but nearly uniform in climate and produce : and occupied by a million and a half of people, of whom half a million are of French descent, the remainder English, Scotch, Irish, and American, in various proportions. Although the population of these provinces (Canada, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward's Island, and Newfoundland) is very small in proportion to their surface, it must be remembered that it is in reality concentrated, for the most part, on a small portion of that surface. Out of 400,000 square miles in Canada, a tract larger than France and Germany together, scarcely 10,000 are cultivated ; and these are peopled at the rate of upwards of 100 to the square mile—a relative number as great as in the least peopled counties of England. The settlements lie in general pretty thickly together, but along vast lines of communication, fronted by the sea, or the

noble rivers and lakes of these countries, and with the wilderness behind them. So little have the colonists explored the country at their backs, that the most remarkable mountain in Lower Canada, situated within twenty-four miles of Quebec, had never been visited, according to M. Bouchette, until the year 1826, when it was ascended by himself. This is peculiarly the case in Lower Canada, where the feudal seigniories extend along the St. Lawrence and other rivers in a very narrow strip of land. In all the thickly settled parts, land is in general much divided; the cities are small, each having a slender neighbourhood to support it; in fact, there are but three places deserving the name—Quebec, Montreal, and Halifax—in all British America. On the other hand, this disposition of the occupied country along the great natural lines of communication is highly favourable to commerce, as they bring the objects required by every man easily into his immediate neighbourhood.

Our North American colonies present such general features of resemblance, that the economical history and statistics of one are nearly applicable to all. Canada is by far the most important, possessing in some parts as rich a soil as any region of America, and every where enjoying great facilities for commerce and communication. Politically speaking, the province has the great disadvantage of want of compactness: it stretches across the map of America, to use Voltaire's expression respecting the dominions of the king of Prussia, like a pair of garters: from Gaspe to our settlements on Lake St. Clair, it has a length of 1500 miles, while the breadth, between the frontier of the United States to the south and the frozen forests, roamed over only by Indians and fur-traders, to the north, rarely exceeds 200. New Brunswick is a magnificently timbered country, with a

soil also very rich in some parts, but very thinly inhabited by a poor population. Nova Scotia is an older colony, and rather more wealthy ; but the soil, generally speaking, is thought to be less productive. Prince Edward's Island, a very well peopled little spot, is chiefly remarkable as exhibiting the last remnant of the old proprietary system. When its survey was completed in 1766, the Earl of Egmont, then a lord of the admiralty, proposed to have its proprietorship settled on himself, on a feudal plan, with power to erect a certain number of baronies, each baron to build a castle, to employ so many men-at-arms, and to do feudal suit and service. This ingenious scheme was not adopted ; but the island was sold by lottery to proprietors in England, in sixty-seven shares. These became subsequently consolidated in a few hands ; and the principal portion belongs now, I believe, to eight proprietors, of whom the lands are held by the occupiers, nominally, on payment of a quit-rent. The effects of this as well as other systems of land granting will fall hereafter more properly under our consideration. Lastly, Newfoundland is a colony of which the prosperity and the very existence depend on the fisheries carried on along her shores, the most valuable in the world. It is only within these few years that this island appears to have possessed any thing like a fixed population ; and agriculture is as yet in a very backward state.

The chief products of our North American colonies are agricultural ; but the surplus of this class of commodities, which the settler has to exchange for the luxuries and conveniences of life, is as yet inconsiderable. This will appear from a short analysis of the export trade of these important provinces.

In 1832, out of exports to the value of 2,450,000*l.*, the produce of land was only 276,000*l.* ; in 1835 the



whole amount of exports was 2,706,000*l.*, and the produce of land had fallen to 121,000*l.* But in order to estimate the whole amount of surplus agricultural produce, there must be added to this quantity that which the North American grower supplies to the lumberer, the timber merchant, and the persons engaged in the fisheries; in return for which he obtains British manufactures and other foreign commodities, through the intervention of traders. Probably, this quantity may amount in ordinary years to double or treble that which is exported; but I have no data whereon to form such an estimate.

But the staple articles of export are the produce of the forests and the fisheries. The export of timber, ashes, &c. amounted in 1835 to 1,478,000*l.*, or considerably more than half the whole exports of the colonies. This branch of commerce is well known to exhibit the principal remnant, next to the sugar trade, of our old colonial system, the present duty on colonial timber being 10*s.* a load, that on foreign timber 55*s.* a load. Its effects on the wealth and industry of the mother country will be more fully considered hereafter. Its results in the colonies have been matter of much debate. By some it is contended, that the lumber business (that of the wood-cutter), besides the amount of wealth which it furnishes, is of use to agriculture, by clearing the forests for the emigrant. But this is certainly not the case: the lumberers select only a few trees for their operations, leaving the rest of the forest untouched; and what they do, serves rather to encumber than to clear the soil, as the loppings are left on the ground. It is contended, also, with what justice I do not know, that the lumberers are in themselves a bad and troublesome part of the population. At present (and it is impossible to legislate with a view to a con-

tingent futurity), the trade is certainly the source of great wealth to these provinces; and, probably, would continue to flourish to a great extent, even were the protection withdrawn. But it is not of a very durable character. The proportion of North American timber fit for the purpose of exportation seems to be singularly small, considering the vast extent of soil covered by forests. It may seem a visionary speculation to contemplate the possibility of a scarcity of timber in the great wooded zone of the earth which stretches along the eastern coast of America, where the dense shade is as yet only pierced at intervals for the habitations of men; and yet it is a fact, that of late years a considerable export trade in this article has arisen from Canada to the neighbouring states of the Union, the forests of New York, Vermont, and Maine, being already thinned of their most valuable produce.\* New Brunswick is now the richest timber country in North America — a few years will probably bring complaints of scarcity from that quarter also.

The fisheries form a more durable branch of commerce. Along the coasts of our colonies “the nations of Europe have for several centuries laboured indefatigably with nets, lines, and every process that can be contrived or imagined; and yet, not the slightest diminution of fruitfulness has ever been observed.”† Newfoundland and Nova Scotia, with its dependency Cape Breton, are the great seats of it. A curious change has taken place of late years in its localities, and the manner in which it is carried on. For centuries the great ambition of colonizing nations was to encourage the fishery by ships, on the great bank of Newfoundland, at a distance from all shores.

\* Murray's *British America*, ii. 22.

† *Ibid.* ii. 277.

The importance attached to this pursuit may be estimated from the numerous treaties in which it is made the subject of mutual arrangement, some of which have been, and are still, loudly complained of by our colonial patriots. But it is still more evinced in the systematic efforts which were made for centuries to put down the coast fishery, and prevent the establishment of resident fishermen on the coasts of Newfoundland and its neighbourhood. All these efforts seem at last to have been abandoned; and the coast-fishery seems now to be much more important than the bank-fishery, to the great advantage of our colonies. The exports of the fisheries amounted in 1832 to the value of 792,000*l.*; in 1835 to 952,000*l.*: nevertheless, it is doubtful whether this branch of trade is progressively increasing; and there is certainly little prospect of its again attaining the height it had reached during our monopoly in the late war, when its produce, in one year, reached the enormous value of 2,800,000*l.*

The trade of these colonies is chiefly carried on with England, the United States, and the West Indies. It is subject to the principle of the old navigation laws, namely, that foreign goods can only be imported into the colonies in vessels of the countries which produce them; which practically excludes the vessels of all foreign countries except the United States from their ports. But it may be doubted, whether these restrictions have in reality much effect in controlling the channels of commerce, or whether much alteration would be made in the carrying trade by their removal—a subject which will be more properly discussed hereafter.

It will be evident from this brief outline, that our North American colonies offer no great temptations for the employment of large capital, or facilities for the accumulation of great fortunes. The agricultural wealth

of individuals cannot be great, where there is so small an amount of foreign export, and so small a non-agricultural population to supply; and were the facilities for disposing of surplus produce greater, still no landlord could expect to become rich by letting his land in a country where any one may become a freeholder on the easiest possible terms. Capital is invested in considerable quantities in the timber trade and the fisheries; but a great part of it is British, and has no local abode in the provinces. It is only within these ten years that mercantile houses of consequence, having Canadian partners, have been established in Quebec and Montreal. Nor, again, do these provinces afford that paradise to emigrants of the labouring class which has been sometimes held out in fallacious descriptions. Where there is not much capital invested in productive industry on a great scale, the demand for hired labourers must be precarious; and the emigrant cannot establish himself in the wilderness without a fund to subsist upon, and means to clear and prepare the place of his occupation; and clearing alone in Canada costs from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per acre. The only mode in which the land can be rendered available for the reception of settlers of this class, is through the agency of land companies or other speculators, who are willing to undertake the expense of clearing with a view to attract emigrants, from whom they may obtain repayment at a future time. But the class of settlers to whom they appear to afford the greatest temptation is that of small farmers, and others, possessed of some means, however slight, and at the same time able and willing to maintain themselves by the labour of their hands. To them it is not too much to say, that with good conduct from their own parts, and exemption from extraordinary casualties, North America offers, after four or five

years of probation, a certainty of a happy competence, a probability of acquiring moderate wealth. These form the core, the most useful and most healthy part, of the great mass of settlers whom this country annually sends across the Atlantic, destined to augment the increasing myriads of small yeomanry who constitute the body of the people in our colonies, and in the Northern States of the Union. Emigrants have very rarely professed themselves disappointed in the soil of any part of our possessions. The climate is a more questionable attribute. The fierceness of its extremes tries some constitutions; the severity of its winter is felt as a drawback by all except the thoroughly acclimatised: its monotony is wearisome, and has the disadvantage of encouraging the favourite vice of the region, intemperance; seven months being spent, for the most part, in forced idleness, and all the labours of the year crowded into five. These are its drawbacks: its advantages are, its general salubrity, its serenity, its steadiness, and the comparative certainty with which the farmer can calculate on its periodical vicissitudes. It must be remembered that it varies, though not very considerably, in the different provinces; it is most severe in Lower Canada and New Brunswick; more humid, and less intense in heat and cold in Nova Scotia and the islands; these, however, are subject to the serious drawback of heavy fogs, with the exception of Prince Edward's Island, which seems to enjoy all the advantages of an insular climate, with few of its inconveniences; mildest, and on the whole most favourable, in Upper Canada.

The state of society in provinces thus circumstanced is and must be essentially republican, whatever may be the character of their institutions. It must be that which necessarily results from the general diffusion of

well-being, and among a people of whom the great bulk are small landed proprietors, with very few wealthy individuals, without an established aristocracy or hierarchy, and without the elements for constructing either. A love for British principles and institutions may prevail among them : we have had the strongest proofs that it does prevail ; but with them it must of necessity be rather a sentiment than a principle.

Our American empire extends, as I have said, over vast tracts of the Western continent, as yet unoccupied by Europeans. The greater proportion will probably always remain so, or only see a population accumulate here and there in its most favoured spots, when the fertile regions to the southward, as yet scarcely marked by cultivation, shall begin to disgorge their overflow of people. But there is one tract which seems to invite colonization ; that which extends along the Pacific, in the neighbourhood of the Columbia river. It possesses a climate very superior to that of Eastern America in the same parallels, and a soil shaded by the noblest forests to be found under the temperate zone. Whenever a communication shall be effected across the Isthmus of Darien, it will become easily accessible to the European world. There are at present difficulties about the question of boundary between ourselves and the United States in that quarter : there is surely room enough for both, and both are interested in its occupation by civilized man, whatever the flag may be under the shelter of which he constructs his first dwelling.

The Cape Colony, or South Africa, is a region possessed of some great natural advantages, which seem to ensure it eventual prosperity ; but these advantages are so balanced by its deficiencies, that it has not hitherto afforded great temptations to the British settler. Its situation is highly commodious, lying in the middle of

one of the great highways of maritime communication. It enjoys a climate which may perhaps be called, without exaggeration, the most salubrious known, that is, the most adapted to the human constitution in general without distinction of race ; and one of the most delightful.\* This climate is moreover particularly suited for variety of production ; the wines, silk, fruit, and corn of Southern Europe flourish there in perfection, together with some of the produce of tropical countries. But, on the other hand, few habitable countries seem to have a larger proportion of useless land. Long ranges of dreary sandstone or granite mountains are divided by flat high plateaux of red clay, on which nothing can be made to grow ; and the physiologist is puzzled to account for the

\* "In 1830, at Hottentots' Holland, out of a population of 1500 persons there died only five, among whom two old persons and one by accident." — *Martin's Statistics of the Colonies*, p. 477. But a more remarkable testimony to its healthiness is to be found in a comparative statement of the mortality of British troops at different colonial stations and at home. I select some of the least, and some of the most healthy situations by way of examples : —

European Soldiers.	Annual Deaths per thousand.		
United Kingdom	-	-	14·0
Sierra Leone	-	-	483·0
Jamaica	-	-	121·3
Madras	-	-	48·1
Ionian Islands	-	-	25·2
Malta	-	-	16·3
Canada	-	-	16·1
Nova Scotia and New Brunswick	-	-	14·7
Cape of Good Hope and Cape District	-	-	13·7
Ditto, Eastern Frontier	-	-	9·8
Native Troops.			
Sierra Leone, Blacks	-	-	30·1
Jamaica, ditto	-	-	30·0
Madras, Natives	-	-	16·1
Cape, Eastern Frontier, ditto	-	-	10·9

If the statements in this table are founded on sufficiently large induction to merit confidence, it would appear that the chances of life for the British soldier at the Cape, are greater than in his native climate. — *Journal of the Statistical Society*, vol. iii.

manner in which subsistence is procured by the amazing herds of wild animals which swarm, at particular seasons of the year, from the unknown north into these inhospitable plains.\* There are in parts fine tracts of land, abounding in picturesque scenery and rich in produce : but the difficulty of communication between these oases is great ; there are no navigable rivers ; 'probably there is not a stream in the colony, extending as it does over 120,000 square miles, which brings down in summer so large a body of water as the Thames. The aridity of climate, which seems to belong more or less to the whole southern temperate zone, is here peculiarly felt. Yet, all things considered, it is not easy to account for the comparative slowness of advance of this colony — comparative only, for it has doubled its population in the last thirty years. Something is owing to the long prevalence of the usages of the Dutch, who systematically discouraged the establishment of a dense population, by granting away their land in insulated tracts, or in circles touching each other and having unoccupied spaces in the interstices. But the small amount of British immigration seems to prove that the soil has been found on the whole indifferently adapted to those species of industry to which the British are accustomed. This was certainly the case in former years, while the chief trade of the colony consisted in the supply of shipping with agricultural produce, and in raising wine for exportation. The cultivation of the vine was introduced by French refugee Protestants. In the time of the late war, government thought it advisable to protect this branch of

\* Surface of the Cape colony : —

Granted on quit-rent	-	-	30,000,000 acres.
Mountain, uncultivable	-	-	25,000,000
"Karro," or desert plain	-	-	16,000,000
Saleable, belonging to Crown	-	-	5,000,000

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76,000,000 (*Col. Mag.*).



industry by discriminating duties. In 1813 these wines were admitted at the payment of one third of the duty then charged on the produce of Spain and Portugal. Cape wine, *eo nomine*, was then a common article of consumption, and certainly bore no favourable reputation. In 1825, when the duties on other wines under went an alteration, this protection was reduced from 28*l.* to 1*l.* a pipe. The complaints of the colonists at the change were lamentable. But since it appears that the amount of wine exported, which in 1824, before the revolution, was 16,000 *leaguers*, had risen to 20,000 in 1828, it cannot be thought that they really suffered much by the alteration. Since that time, the import has been pretty stationary ; but under what form it comes into the market, we must not inquire too anxiously ; for the name of “ Cape wine ” no longer reaches the ears of the consumer. But another and more important species of production has been very lately introduced. Wool is now exported in considerable quantities. In 1830 the export was only 33,000 lbs., in 1836 it had risen to 373,203, in 1838 to 422,506 ; scarcely, however, one fifteenth of that from Sydney.

The Dutch boors form still the mass of the people, living in single families, at a wide distance from each other, occupied in the pasture of their numerous herds, and in the most animating and dangerous exercises of the chase : they are strangely changed in outward circumstances from their Batavian ancestors, yet are said to retain much of the same national character. The government is absolute, under a governor and legislative council appointed by the crown. The tribunals offer a strange medley of Roman law, modified by Dutch usages, administered on each circuit according to English or Scottish practice, as the learned functionary who presides may happen to belong to either nation.

Passing by the Mauritius, a flourishing island, formerly a French possession, but exhibiting no very remarkable difference in its economical condition from that of the West India colonies, unless in its great fertility ; and Ceylon, in which colonization, properly so called, has scarcely commenced ; we arrive at Australia, the land of promise to modern emigrants, and the most remarkable field of British industry, out of the limits of Britain, at the present day. After the coast of New South Wales had been discovered by Captain Cook, it was made a penal settlement, with a view to rid our gaols of the number of prisoners who were accumulating there after the American war. In 1787 the *Sirius* frigate landed 800 convicts at Botany Bay. The coast of that inlet, which had appeared so tempting to Captain Cook, was soon found to afford nothing but swamps and sand : an instance, among many, of the ease with which government has allowed itself to be misled by the reports of naval discoverers, to many of whom all land is much alike, and who, even when better qualified to judge, see the tract they have explored only at one season of the year, and are almost certain to be unreasonable either in their praises or their disapprobation. On the 26th January, 1788, the little colony removed to Sydney.

In the fifty years which has since elapsed, the progress of New South Wales has been so astonishing, as far as regards the production and accumulation of wealth, as to afford the most remarkable phenomena in colonial history. In 1789 the first harvest was reaped ; in 1790 the first permanent settler (a convict) took possession of the plot of land allotted to him. In 1793 the first purchase of colonial grain (1200 bushels) was made by government. The first newspaper was printed in 1802. In 1803 Mr. Macarthur exhibited in London the first sample of merino wool from the sheep of the colony.

In 1807, 245 lbs. of that wool were exported from Sydney; in 1820, 100,000 lbs.; in 1830, 3,564,532 lbs.; in 1840, about 7,000,000 lbs. Sydney is now a fine city, with all the appurtenances of a great provincial town, and exhibiting much greater signs of wealth than one of similar size would display in England; and an acre of land within the town boundaries sold lately for 20,000*l*. There is nothing at all equalling this in the increase of the Western States of America, not with respect to population, for that increases in our colony at a comparatively slow rate: New South Wales at present has only 100,000 inhabitants; our whole Australian colonies 160 or 170,000; while the number of people in Ohio, in the same space of fifty years, has risen from 50,000 to 1,800,000. But the exports of Ohio are trifling in comparison. It is the relative increase of trade and surplus wealth in proportion to population which gives to our Australian settlements their distinctive character. Our exports to New South Wales alone, in the year ending January, 1840, amounted to the value of 1,176,000*l*.; so that each individual of the population (about 100,000) consumed the value of 11*l*. per head. It may serve to illustrate the great wealth of the colony to compare this with the consumption of some other parts of the world, in which British manufactures are pretty extensively used. Each inhabitant of the United States consumes British manufactures to the value of about 10*s*. per annum; each Portuguese, about 6*s*.; each German, 5*s*. And, in return for these manufactured goods, we derive from Australia one of the most valuable raw materials in the commercial world. The wool of that region is now exclusively used in some kinds of manufacture; it may be anticipated, that it will compete more and more effectively with that of the wool growing countries of

Europe, where heavy rents enter into the costs of production, and the limited extent of soil restricts the supply; in fact, as it has been truly observed, Australia possesses in regard to this important article, something approaching to the kind of monopoly which Mexico enjoyed, in the days of her prosperity, in the production of the precious metals.

This advantage is partly owing to peculiarities of soil and climate. The former is, generally speaking, little attractive to the agricultural labourer. Australia, as far as it has yet been explored, has been quaintly termed a region imperfectly formed, in which the deposits have not been sufficiently upheaved by volcanic action, so as to produce that variety of surface, and prepare the strata to furnish that perennial supply of water, which are found in most habitable parts of the earth. In the only parts over which discovery has as yet extended, there is a great proportion of arid plains, alternately swamp and sand, and of barren rocky tracts of horizontal sandstone. "The amount of surface," says Major Mitchell, "comprised in European kingdoms, affords no criterion of what may be necessary for the growth of a new people in Australia."\* The very ease with which the soil is cleared from the thin sprinkling of the heavier timber, would suffice to prove to a North American that it was not worth the trouble of cultivation. This, however, would be an erroneous conclusion. A few tracts have been found extremely productive, although wanting in the recognized American token of fertility. And if New South Wales has never yet raised sufficient corn for its own consumption, this seems in reality more attributable to the existence of much more profitable employment for labour, than to the deficiencies of the soil itself. While the inhabitants can afford to purchase

\* Vol. ii. p. 526.

flour from the distant markets of America with their own surplus commodities, they are probably turning the advantages of their situation to far better account by persevering in the industry which has hitherto proved so successful. The climate is remarkable for its singular dryness. The great droughts, it is said, are supposed to return about once in every ten or twelve years, and last two or three; that of 1826-29 was peculiarly severe; hardly any rain fell, and the cultivation of the earth was nearly suspended. Even in ordinary years, there are only between forty and fifty days of rain. This vast continent, of which scarcely one sixth has been explored, seems indeed to promise a very small extent of habitable land. Mountains rise at a small distance from the east coast, which give out streams to the westward; these appear to be lost in interminable plains, covered with sand or hopeless "scrub," and sometimes converted into marshes and lakes by a few days of rain. The once favourite theories of an inland sea in the interior, or of high ranges of undiscovered mountains, seem now to be nearly abandoned, from observation of the hot winds which proceed in all directions from thence towards the sea; and all search after the outlets of large rivers has proved unsuccessful. This character of drought appears common to all the Australian colonies; greatest, perhaps, in the old counties of New South Wales and in South Australia; rather less severe in the new settlement of Port Philip; slightest in Western Australia, and in the island of Van Diemen's Land; but here I am entering on debateable ground, for no subject can be more fiercely contested than the comparative excellence of their climate between the citizens of these rival commonwealths.

But notwithstanding its agricultural disadvantages, a more delightful climate for the health and comfort of

man and beast than that of Sydney can hardly be imagined. In this respect, New South Wales ranks only second, if at all, to the Cape of Good Hope. It is free from the pests of malaria, deleterious dews, musquitos, and the other mischiefs, both of hot and cold regions. It is admirably suited, in all probability, to the vine, the olive, the mulberry, and other productions of dry and temperate countries, which as yet have scarcely been tried there; while observation has shown its peculiar adaptation for the growth of its staple commodity, wool. There is some quality in the climate, say observers, not hitherto ascertained, which improves the fleece of the animal after its transportation from Europe. And the multiplication of flocks, particularly on the grassy plains which extend westward from the Blue Mountains, in South Australia, and round Port Philip, is already great, and may be extended beyond calculation.

But these advantages could hardly have been turned to account as they have been, without that abundant supply of labour which New South Wales has hitherto furnished to immigrant capitalists. By transporting thither on the average 3000 convicts per annum, the government has in fact presented the settlers with labour to that extent, free of the expense of importing it; just as if it had taken upon itself to furnish a plantation with so many slaves or indented labourers. And the nature of its staple requiring rather attention than the labour of many hands, enables the colonists to use this advantage to the utmost extent.

It has lately been thought expedient, with a view to the moral state of the colony, to limit this supply; apparently with the view of causing it, at some future time, to cease altogether. The reasons for this change, and its probable effects, will form the subject of separate

discussion. The colonists have now to look to the influx of free labour to supply the deficiency. This it is necessary that government, or capitalists, should supply; few emigrants of the poorer classes are likely to undertake so distant a voyage on their own means. And the stream of emigration has in fact been turned of late years so abundantly towards these shores, that the population of New South Wales alone is now increased by the arrival of 8000 or 10,000 new comers annually. But this supply can only be kept up by systematic measures; and the nature of those which are now adopted, will also be considered by us hereafter with some minuteness.

It is scarcely necessary to dwell on the peculiarities of our other Australian colonies, for there is a striking general similarity in point of natural features. The insular position of Van Diemen's Land modifies its climate to a certain extent: it appears, in fact, to be singularly variable in respect of temperature. This also has been a convict colony from the beginning, and more exclusively so than even New South Wales. In 1821 free emigration commenced, and for some time its progress was very rapid; but the settlers having been allowed, in the usual inconsiderate manner, to spread themselves at random on the soil, it is alleged that this island, as large as Ireland, and peopled by only 50,000 inhabitants, has already arrived at that first point of retardation in the history of colonies, when the best land in available situations is already occupied or taken out of the market. This seems hardly credible; yet there are some circumstances in its economical condition not very accountable. Its own inhabitants speak in magnificent terms of its capabilities and prospects: it was confidently foretold, that it would become the granary of the pastoral settlements of the Australian continent;

yet, of late years, comparatively little capital has found its way there; and it is said that the re-emigration to Port Philip and New Zealand has fully equalled the immigration. But notwithstanding this temporary depression, there can be little doubt of its resources and eventual prosperity. It has a great advantage in its favourable situation for the command of the whale fisheries.

Port Philip is a highly flourishing dependency of New South Wales; its recent advance has been more striking than that of any other Australian colony. South Australia is remarkable from the peculiar circumstances attending its foundation. Authority was given by act of parliament to commissioners to manage the disposal of its public lands, on the express condition that the purchase money was to be applied, without distinction, to the conveyance of emigrants from the mother country. The price has been uniform, and fixed for some years at 1*l.* per acre. This was the practical application of a principle then recently promulgated, and which will form one of the most important subjects of consideration in my present lectures. It is perhaps to be wished, that the experiment had first been tried in a region of greater natural capabilities; for the accounts of recent explorers respecting the extent of useful land in South Australia are not very encouraging.\* Still much remains to be explored; and although the colony has suffered a little in public opinion from the disappointment which has followed on exaggerated expectations, still a community

\* The reader should however consult the testimonies collected by the South Australian commissioners in their fourth report (pp. 13, 14.), as to the superiority of the climate to that of New South Wales: some of them come from unfavourable witnesses, and many seem entitled to high credit.



which has passed through the first years of existence, usually so trying to a new settlement, almost without a struggle; into which capital has poured with a profusion unequalled in colonial history; which, in five years from its foundation, counts some 12,000 or 15,000 inhabitants, possessed of 100,000 sheep, and has now under cultivation 1000 acres of land, besides its great pastoral wealth; can afford to submit to a little detraction, and point to the evidence of facts as the most conclusive answer to it. "There is not at the present time one of the Australian colonies where wages are so high as in and round Adelaide." \*

The colony of the Swan River, or Western Australia, was founded, on very opposite principles, in 1829. The government made over the soil at a very low rate to a number of great undertakers, who engaged to carry out emigrants. An enormous quantity of land was speedily appropriated; according to Sir J. Stirling, at the rate of about 2000 acres to every man in the colony.† It proved impossible to keep the labourers in the service of the capitalists in a country where land was squandered with such profusion. The labourers were unable to support themselves on the soil without assistance: great hardships were experienced, and serious difficulties incurred, from which the colony is only beginning to recover. Its population scarcely exceeded 3000 by the latest accounts. But its natural capabilities are great; superior, perhaps, on the whole, to those of any other region of Australia.

I have last to mention the new settlement of New Zealand; and to mention it only; for though we may be disposed to prognosticate the best success to a colony

\* Westminster Review, Jan. 1841.

† Report of the Land and Emigration Board, 1840, p. 22.

founded under such good auspices, and in a spirit of enthusiasm unequalled in modern colonial enterprise — which carries the mind back to the days of Raleigh and his adventurous cotemporaries — no accounts have as yet reached this country on which we can safely build our speculations. The situation for trade is admirable, the climate appears highly favourable for agricultural purposes, and there is doubtless no deficiency of fertile soil. The energetic and comparatively industrious natives contrast very advantageously with the degraded tribes of Australia, and even with the American Indians; but whether this superiority shall form a blessing or a curse to the settlement, depends mainly on the settlers themselves. But they will find the process of colonization a far more laborious work, in a country so mountainous in surface and so abundantly clad with vegetation, than in those Australian regions from which many of the adventurers proceed; requiring rather the dogged and solitary perseverance of the American backwoodsman, than the lighter qualities of enterprise and readiness which lead to success in the savannas of New South Wales.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE IV.

## STATISTICS OF THE PRINCIPAL BRITISH COLONIES.

## No. I.

## 1. CANADA (before its division).

*Population.*

1760. 65,000

1784. 113,000

## 2. LOWER PROVINCE.

*Population.*

1835. 450,000

1837. 511,917 (*Census*).1840. 600,000 (*Supposed*).*Imports. Exports.*

1835.	£1,496,376	£896,847	{	<i>Timber</i>	£620,182
				<i>Ashes</i>	176,231

1837. 1,602,253 908,702

1839. 1,400,000 950,000

## 3. UPPER PROVINCE.

	1806.	1811.	1823.	1830.	1853.	1859.
Population - -	70,718	77,000	151,097	234,865	336,461	407,696

## No. II.

## LOWER NORTH AMERICAN PROVINCES.

1. NEW BRUNSWICK.					
			1824.	1834.	1840.
Population	-	-	74,136	119,457	156,000
			1822.	1828.	1831.
Imports	-	-	£276,528	£266,528	£603,871
Exports	-	-	272,177	457,138	427,318
					1835.
					£621,599
					577,211
					(Timber.)
					498,789
					1839.
					£1,513,204
					819,291
2. NOVA SCOTIA AND CAPE BRETON.					
			1817.	1827.	1840. (Supposed.)
Population	-	-	98,913	153,878	200,000
			1822.	1830.	1835.
Imports	-	-	£481,453	£1,405,153	£1,035,660
Exports	-	-	246,852	714,865	887,367
					£742,349
					480,557
					(Timber.)
					119,026
					(Fish.)
					169,413
3. PRINCE EDWARD'S ISLAND.					
			1827.	1833.	1840. (Supposed.)
Population	-	-	23,266	32,292	40,000
			1823.	1833.	
Imports	-	-	£28,813	£70,066	
Exports	-	-	28,747	31,798	
4. NEWFOUNDLAND.					
			1825.	1836.	
Population	-	-	55,719	74,705	
			1835.	1836.	
Imports	-	-	£576,796	£579,799	
Exports	-	-	737,022	787,099	
			(Fish.)		
			437,306		
			(Oil.)		
			236,301		

## No. III.

## CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

	1797.	1807.	1815.	1823.	1833.	1836.
Population -	61,947	73,482	82,363	116,205	129,713	150,110
	1835.		1839 ( <i>Blue Book</i> ).			
Imports -	£534,189		£534,750, of which colonial produce, £241,309			
Exports -	362,280					

## No. IV.

## MAURITIUS.

		1767.	1807.	1827.	1832.	1835.
Population {	Whites - -	3,163	6,489	8,111	} 26,560	29,612
	Free coloured - -	587	5,919	15,444		
	Slaves - -	18,777	65,367	69,076	63,056	Appren- tices. 61,045
Total - - - -		22,537	77,768	92,631	89,616	90,657
		1835.		1835.		
Imports - -		£660,518		Exports - -	£699,000	

## No. V.

NEW SOUTH WALES.							
	1788.	1810.	1821.	1828.	1833.	1836.	1840.
Population -	1,030	8,293	29,783	36,598	71,070	77,096	110,000
	1828.	1832.	1834.	1835.	1836.	1839.	
Imports -	570,000	604,620	991,990	889,926	1,237,406	1,173,440	
Exports -	90,650	384,344	587,641	602,316	748,624		
Principal Exports (1835): — Wool - - 300,917							
Oil - - 166,360							

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.						
			1822.	1830.	1835.	1836.
Population -	-	-	4,996	24,504	40,283	43,895
			1824.	1835.	1836.	
Imports -	-	-	£62,000	583,646	332,548	
Exports -	-	-	£14,500	320,679	258,609	
SOUTH AUSTRALIA.						
Emigrants sailed from London 1836 } 2,220						
1837 } 3,154						
1838 } 5,320						
1839 } 16,000.						
Present population (supposed), 16,000.						
			Number of Sheep.	Bullocks and Cows.	Horses.	
June 30. 1839 -	-	-	58,500	6,250	520	
December, 1839 -	-	-	108,700	7,600	800	
June, 1840 -	-	-	186,000	14,800	1,250	



## **PART II.**

**ECONOMICAL EFFECTS OF COLONIZATION ON THE  
PARENT STATE.**





## LECTURE V.

EFFECTS OF EMIGRATION ON THE PROGRESS OF POPULATION  
IN THE MOTHER COUNTRY.

THE portion of my subject to which I am anxious next to call your attention relates to the effects produced by colonization, and by the maintenance of colonies and intercourse with them, on the wealth of the mother country. It is not, perhaps, a topic of so much general interest as those of which we have treated on a former occasion, or as those to which we shall at a future time direct ourselves, when the developement of colonies *themselves* is brought in its turn under our view. The fortunes of the new shoot, when separated from its parent stem, afford a more pleasing object of contemplation than the slight changes which may be produced in the condition of the old familiar tree. The mere effort of directing the mind to travel abroad to those new regions of romance and expectation, where all is life, and hope, and active energy, affords a relief to the spirits, which again feel wearied and fettered when it is called back to fix its attention at home. This yearning after the distant and the unseen is a common propensity of our nature; and how much is the force of that "secret impulse" cherished and strengthened, in the minds of us Englishmen, by all the associations in the midst of which we are educated? Masters of every sea, and colonists of every shore, there is scarcely a nook which our industry has not rendered accessible, scarcely a region to which the eye can wander in the map, in which we have not some object of national interest — some factory for our trade, some settlement of our citizens.

It is a sort of instinctive feeling to us all, that the destiny of our name and nation is not here, in this narrow island which we occupy; that the spirit of England is volatile, not fixed; that it lives in our language, our commerce, our industry, in all those channels of inter-communication by which we embrace and connect the vast multitude of states, both civilized and uncivilized, throughout the world. No circumstance, in my view, affords at once such a proof of our vocation to this great end, and such an augury of our success in the pursuit of it, as the peculiar and (in a certain sense of the word) unselfish interest with which schemes of colonization are regarded by almost all classes of society: the sanguine hopes we are apt to entertain of their success, the sacrifices we are willing to make for their promotion, even with little or no regard to the manner in which they may affect our economical prosperity at home.

Nor indeed would any reasoning, however subtle, readily convince the mass of mankind, that any evils can attend on a process which seems to be dictated by nature itself. When labourers are starving for want of employment, when capitalists are vainly stretching their ingenuity to devise some profitable investment for their wealth, or ruining each other by overstrained competition, he must be a most ingenious sophist, who should succeed in persuading the community that its interest was to forbid the first to emigrate, or the latter to employ their capital abroad. "It is as natural," to use the language of Burke, "for people to flock into a busy and wealthy country, that by any accident may be thin of people, as it is for the dense air to rush into those parts which are rarefied." It is by the migration of barbarous tribes that the whole earth has been peopled; by the colonizing genius of some more refined nations, that its

civilization, as far as that has hitherto proceeded, has been effected. Every recorded fact in the history of man seems to indicate these as the appointed means through which his social developement takes place. Nor has there ever yet been an instance in which a colonizing nation can be shown to have deteriorated, in population or in wealth, by reason of her efforts in that direction, however lavish and long continued. It might seem therefore almost unnecessary, with the whole weight of experience inclining us in one direction, to enter into any examination of principles on a subject apparently so clear and elementary. Still there are theories on the subject, to which, although practically considered they are little more than the leisure speculations of ingenious men, it behoves us as students to direct our attention.

With regard to the *exportation of capital*, there is a school of political economists, who regard it as necessarily injurious to the community in its immediate effects. Their opinion will require a detailed investigation. With regard to *emigration*, I am not indeed aware that any writers, whose views are at all worth examining, regard it as economically mischievous. I mean, of course, emigration carried to any probable amount; for it is a question of degree. It is clear that the emigration of labourers to some indefinite extent, would injuriously derange the market for labour: the only real question is, whether there is any substantial apprehension of that extent being reached.

Such a result was indeed, as we all know, one of the favourite bugbears of political economists in former times. But in point of fact there never were wanting, long before the subject had been scientifically investigated, observers of a more vigorous cast of mind, to whom the tendency of population to become redundant, and the obvious remedy for such redundancy, were well known,

and who altogether discarded the imaginary terrors which prevailed upon the subject. Among many such authorities to which I might easily refer you, I will content myself with citing a state paper of Lord Bacon, adduced by Sir Wilmot Horton in his third letter on emigration. It was delivered to James I. in 1606, by way of exhortation to pursue vigorous measures for the colonizing of Ireland. "An effect of peace in fruitful kingdoms," said he, "where the stock of people, receiving no consumption nor diminution by war, doth continually multiply and increase, must in the end be a surcharge or overflow of people, more than the territories can well maintain, which many times insinuating a general necessity and want of means into all estates, doth turn external peace into external troubles and seditions. Now, what an excellent diversion of this inconvenience is ministered by God's providence to your majesty in this plantation of Ireland, wherein so many families may receive sustentation and fortune, and the discharge of them out of England and Scotland may prevent many seeds of future perturbation, so that it is as if a man were troubled for the avoidance of water from the places where he hath built his house, and afterwards should advise with himself to cast those floods, pools, or streams, for pleasure, provision, or use. So shall your Majesty on this work have a double commodity, in the avoidance of people here, and in making use of them there." \*

Such has been the general language of the better class of political philosophers, and such, in general, the encouragement given by enlightened statesmen to schemes of emigration. And it is, I think, hardly necessary for me to notice, even in passing, the strange doctrines which it has been attempted in our own day

\* See Quarterly Review, No. lxxiv. 575.

to set up in some quarters, in opposition to these dictates of ordinary reason and experience. Those tenets have, indeed, themselves fallen into the contempt and oblivion which they merited. There was one writer, celebrated for a short time, and, I do believe, sincerely honest in his views, however unjustifiable the means to which he resorted in support of them, whose fate ought to serve as a warning to all who embark in these controversies, from any other motive than a pure love of truth. Addressing himself to the prejudices of the vulgar, great and small, by misrepresenting doctrines which they could not, and by attacking the authors of them with slanderous abuse which they could understand; appealing to the religious sensibilities of a better class of minds by misquoted and misinterpreted texts, and by unwarranted, not to say blasphemous, assumptions, respecting the course of the providential government of the world; declaiming against what he called theory, and setting up, in opposition to the views of others, the most unfounded and gratuitous speculations which ever were seriously committed to writing, he succeeded for a time, by means of party patronage, in raising for himself a name among supporters as credulous and as prejudiced as himself. He has met, no doubt, with the usual fate of such pretenders: his works, quoted not ten years ago as high authorities in society and in the senate, have altogether disappeared from circulation. But the spirit which produced these works, and ensured them a reception, still survives; the readiness to embrace any imaginary hypothesis, by which the cogency of philosophical argument from known premises may be evaded; the readiness to believe and circulate any ill of the supporters of tenets which we suspect and dread to be true.

The tendency of opinion of late years has run so

strongly in favour of emigration, and such a variety of schemes have been pressed on government and on public notice for relieving the market for labour of a part of what is termed our surplus population by encouraging it, that we shall find ourselves called upon to guard against exaggerated expectations of good, rather than fears of evil, when we come to consider the subject more attentively.

“ The different progress of population in different countries and periods is not a consequence of any variation in the principle or instinct which prompts man to multiply his species, but depends chiefly on the facility with which food, and the various articles necessary for his subsistence and accommodation, may be procured under different circumstances.” \* The ordinary rate of wages in any country depends on the magnitude of that portion of its capital which is appropriated to the payment of wages compared with the number of labourers. Their condition, consequently, improves or deteriorates, according as either that portion of capital or their number increases fastest. But the tendency of numbers to increase, considered by itself, is nearly a *constant quantity*. The tendency of the fund for the support of labour to increase depends on many and variable causes: first and foremost, on the relative fertility of soils. It increases at a certain ratio while the most fertile soil only is cultivated. As soon as an inferior soil is resorted to, its rate of increase diminishes. And as the next soils resorted to for the purpose of obtaining food become more and more barren, so the rate of increase diminishes more and more. If the population continues, during this process, to increase at the same rate as before, there is gradually less and less food to divide in proportion to the number

\* M'Culloch's edition of Adam Smith, p. 30. n.

of mouths which are to consume it, until at last its further progress is checked by famine. But the rate of increase of the population can only be restrained (extraordinary contingencies apart) by an exercise of power and will on the part of the labourers in keeping down their own numbers. Supposing that they have the power, it is obvious that their destiny is under their own controul; that is, as far as the exercise of each individual will can operate. According to the habits prevailing among them, the rate of real wages will fall or remain stationary, or for a time even rise, while that natural retardation of the increase of capital, of which I have already spoken, is actually going on.

But let us suppose, that the rate of wages is in a course of diminution. By the removal of a certain number of superfluous hands, it is obvious that the balance can be restored without the necessity of any increase of prudence and self-restraint on the part of the labourers. But it must be remembered, that this cannot be effected without some sacrifice of capital in transporting them. Of course, therefore (unless we suppose both capital and population redundant, a supposition of which I shall speak by and bye), the economical success of that experiment depends on whether the abstraction of capital, and consequent diminution of employment for labour, over-balances, or not, the relief which the emigration gives to the market for labour. Leaving, however, this difficulty for the present out of the question, it is plain that when the surplus labourers are removed, those who remain at home will again be called upon to exercise prudence and self-restraint, or their rate of wages must again diminish, or the emigration must, in a short time, be again repeated. Let a very short period elapse, and the population will again require a similar drain. There is only one other



alternative; namely, that in the interval between the emigration and the filling up of the vacuum thus created, some circumstance should occur to give a sudden impulse to the productiveness of labour. Such is the direct effect of great improvements in agriculture: such is also the result produced, indirectly, by the extended use of machinery in manufactures, and the discovery of new markets for exportable commodities. These circumstances may undoubtedly, for the time, raise again the rate of wages, and render the exercise of self-restraint, of which I have spoken, unnecessary.

The truth then appears to be this, that in a natural state of things, and leaving wholly out of view any excess of population above the means of employment which bad laws or political circumstances may produce, emigration is no remedy for over population unless it be continually repeated; which, on a really great-scale, is scarcely likely to happen in any country. Any single emigration, however large, can have no permanent effect in checking the undue increase of numbers unless it be followed either by increased forethought, or by an increase in the productiveness of labour; and either the one or the other of these causes must infallibly have produced the same effect on the progress of population, only in a somewhat longer time, if there had been no emigration at all.

And thus much, I think, is pretty generally admitted even by the most zealous advocates of systematic emigration. But it is commonly said, on the other hand, that there are various circumstances in the actual condition of this and other communities, diseases as they may be termed in the body politic, which produce, from time to time, a great temporary redundancy of population; and that before economical or moral remedies can be applied at home, room must be made for

their operation by the removal of the large surplus created by these evils. "Colonization abroad," says Sir W. Horton, whose efforts in this cause are well known, "as a remedy for the evils of a relatively  
" redundant population, is, and has been with me, only  
" a subordinate subject of inquiry. I consider it only  
" as the best and cheapest mode of disposing of that  
" abstraction of superfluous labouring population from  
" the general labour-market, which I contend to be  
" the main remedy for the distressed condition of the  
" labouring classes of the United Kingdom, inasmuch  
" as it is that superfluous labour which is not wanted by  
" any party as a means of production, which deteriorates the condition of the whole labouring classes  
" collectively."

In considering the question thus raised, of the applicability of emigration on a large scale to a country circumstanced like our own, with a view to relieving its supposed redundancy of labouring people, it must be remembered, in the first place, that we are utterly unable to submit our speculations to any test of experience. At no time, and in no country, since the migration of the barbarous tribes in Europe and Asia, has the experiment ever been tried. We have no instance on record of a country getting rid, by voluntary sacrifice, of a large portion of its people. We have no very authentic data to reason on respecting the effect of such an abstraction when produced by violent means — by famine or pestilence — so softened in their character have these scourges of the human race become in the civilized parts of the world. All the great empires which European energy has founded, have been raised by voluntary emigration; and this, as it has been truly said, "is never  
" carried so far as to occasion any sensible diminution  
" of the numbers of a people, or to raise the rate of

“wages. If it did this, it would immediately stop.”\* We are apt to forget how small the seed has been which has produced the great crop we see before us. The largest number of emigrants which has ever left the shores of the United Kingdom in a single year, has little exceeded 100,000 †, something more than one fourth of the estimated annual increase of our people; the ordinary proportion is much smaller; and even were it to continue at the highest point, it is obviously far too small to make any sensible alteration in the balance of the labour market. And as with ourselves, so elsewhere, few of those who leave their native country are pressed by absolute necessity; the greater number are persons above the average in point of energy, who are driven abroad less by the fear of worse, than the desire of better.

Spain and Portugal have been, after England, the countries which have sent forth by far the largest number of emigrants in a series of centuries; and it has been supposed by many writers, that the emigration has been such as to be sensibly felt, and that its effects have been pernicious. Social laws of a mischievous economical tendency, strict entails, large quantities of land held by the church and corporations, narrow municipal regulations, oppressive fiscal enactments, and,

\* M'Culloch's edition of A. Smith, p. 456.

† An attempt is made in the “Proceedings of the Statistical Society of London,” vol. i. p. 292., to calculate the average annual number of emigrants from England and Wales of late years, and its proportion to the natural increase of the population.

Of England and Wales alone, the annual loss from emigration was 4000 previous to 1820; 9000 at the year 1827; and 30,000 at the year 1832. The mean annual increase of the population of England and Wales, from 1820 to 1830, was 180,000.—See also the tables in *Dégérando, de la Bienfaisance Publique*, iv. 104. &c.

In the appendix to this lecture will be found collected the official returns of British emigration for the last twenty years to our colonies and to the United States.

far worse than all these, a political system destroying the national spirit, have in these countries for many ages produced precisely the same effect on public wealth as if the soil were more barren and capital less productive than elsewhere. It was not an unnatural supposition, that, under such a state of things, large masses, both of population and of capital, were continually leaving the country for America. Yet it appears that such was not the fact. By far the larger proportion of Spanish emigrants to America was furnished by the most populous, and industrious, and least oppressed provinces, Biscay, Catalonia, Galicia, the Canaries. And it is clearly proved, that whatever may have been the case in the rest of the monarchy, the population and wealth of those districts has been slowly but steadily increasing all the while. Emigration there, as with ourselves, was in reality nothing more than the almost imperceptible overflow of a minute portion of the national strength and substance.\* In the com-

\* The mode in which Mr. Sadler accounts for this phenomenon (*On Population*, i. 471.), is clearly inconclusive. Nor is there any probability in his supposition, "that the pauses, not to say the retrogression, which evidently occurred in the movements of the population of England in the earlier part of the last century, was mainly attributable to the great drains which the plantations, as well as other causes, had made upon the inhabitants during the preceding one." But his chapters on emigration contain a valuable collection of facts, tending to establish his position, that the amount of emigration to North America, since its first settlement, has been very generally underrated, and especially by Mr. Malthus.

It is remarkable that the province of Ulster in Ireland, which has always been the great source of emigration from that country, is also the most populous part of it. In 1729 it was estimated that it sent 3000 annually to America; which number afterwards greatly increased. In the years 1771, 1772, 1773, it averaged 9500 per annum.—*Sadler on Population*, b. ii. c. 5, 6. Yet the population of Ulster has increased for a century at a greater rate than that of any other part of Ireland.

Suabia, with the old Palatinate, has also contributed very largely to the present population of America. From the end of Queen Anne's reign to 1755, it is said that from 4000 to 8000 Palatines

mercial history of the country, its effects may pass for nothing.

China is another of the great colonizing countries of the globe; for although colonization, with a view to dominion, is not a part of its policy, yet its industrious people swarm into every part of the Eastern Ocean, where there appears to be an opening for their exertions, and settle there under foreign governments. It is a country in a great part of which the increase of capital appears to have reached almost its last point of retardation; the soil in some provinces is nearly all occupied, while the stationary condition of the people, in regard to the arts of life, presents no prospect of improvement in their condition by increased productiveness of labour. Population is therefore continually pressing on the means of subsistence; but such an amount of emigration as actually takes place, consisting, also, entirely of persons who are able to emigrate at their own expense, can have no more effect in regulating the increase of that vast multitude, whether of 150 or 300 millions of human beings, than the water which is let into or out of the London docks on the tide of the ocean. Infanticide, famine, and early mortality, are, it is to be feared, the real checks which keep it down to the necessary level.

We are reduced, therefore, to discuss this question on theoretical grounds only, by speculating on the effects which an extensive abstraction of people would produce on the relation between that portion of capital which is destined for the maintenance of labour, and the supply of labour, such as they are in our own country. With

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went annually to Pennsylvania alone.—*Sadler*, b. iv. ch. 5. And the tables to the work of Dégérando (*De la Bienfaisance Publique*), which I have not now before me, show an almost incredible amount of emigration from that quarter since the Peace of 1815. Yet it is still the thickest peopled part of Germany.

us, the natural retardation of the increase of capital, of which I have already spoken, has long commenced. We are continually applying fresh portions of it to less and less productive portions of the soil, while, at the same time, the importation of those necessities on which the labourer subsists from foreign countries is nearly forbidden. These causes tend to make the cost of the production of necessities continually rise. On the other hand, they are, to a great extent, counteracted by improvements in agriculture, which tend to depress that cost of production; and the great expansion of the foreign market for our products creates a demand for labour which tends to raise wages, and enable the labourer to command a greater proportion of necessities. Such has been the operation of these conflicting causes, that, on the whole, the real wages of labour have probably rather advanced than diminished during the last half century, while population has increased more rapidly than in any European country. "The great increase of population of late years in "England and Scotland," says Mr. Malthus in his last work\*, "has been owing to the power of the "labouring classes to obtain a greater quantity of "food, partly by temporary high wages in manufac- "tures, partly by the increased use of potatoes, partly "by increased task-work and the increased employ- "ment of women and children, partly by increased "parish allowances to families, and partly by the in- "creased relative cheapness of manufactures and foreign "commodities."

But the demand for labour, in a great part of England, is peculiarly inconstant. Variations in foreign demand,

\* Political Economy, p. 235.

changes of fashion, not to speak of the great commercial crises which, in the present state of the civilized world, affect many nations at once, but the wealthiest most violently, are continually occurring to such an extent that the market for manufacturing labour is almost always overstocked somewhere, sometimes almost everywhere. The unemployed labourers must be supported, either on their own savings or the charity of others. But suppose that, on the occasion of some one of these crises, the nation were to rouse itself to the effort of getting rid by emigration of some hundreds of thousands of superfluous arms, what would be the consequence? That, at the first returning demand for labour, there would be a deficiency. However rapid reproduction may be, it takes at all events the space of a generation to replace the loss of adult labour. Now the profits of our manufacturers depend mainly on the power of making use of the prosperous moment when demand is brisk, and thus compensating themselves for the interval during which it is slack. This power is secured to them only by the command of machinery and of manual labour. They must have hands ready by them; they must be able to increase the activity of their operations when required, and to slacken it again according to the state of the market; or they cannot possibly maintain that pre-eminence in the race of competition on which the wealth of the country is founded. I am not discussing the question, whether or no a state of things which renders the employment of large masses of the people so precarious as this (although more so, perhaps, in appearance than in reality) is politically or morally desirable. But unless we are prepared to face the national revolution which must follow any violent blow to our manufacturing interest, any large abstrac-

tion from that part of our population would be a suicidal measure.

But with respect to another great division of our people—our agricultural labourers—it is thought by many that a permanent redundancy has been produced by artificial means; by the bounty on population afforded by our poor laws, as they were at one time administered. That they did afford such a bounty cannot reasonably be doubted. They diverted a portion of the national capital to the production of necessities for idle or half-employed paupers, which would otherwise have been used for some other purpose, just in the same manner as if government were to tax productive industry in order to raise and feed additional regiments of soldiers. The bounty being withdrawn by the late enactment, the population thus created, so far as it was altogether in excess over the demand for labour, was of course redundant. And no one can doubt that emigration was the true remedy for such redundancy, provided only that the cost of such emigration did not exceed the cost of maintaining them at home until the surplus should become absorbed by some increase of employment. But the experience of a few years has shown us, that this excess, although to a certain extent real, has been greatly exaggerated. Aided, undoubtedly, by favourable circumstances, especially by the sudden demand for labour which our great public works have occasioned, the balance seems to have redressed itself, and along with the abuses of the old system the apparent redundancy has in most cases nearly disappeared. Parishes have been enabled to effect the emigration of labourers on favourable terms by the assistance of government; but they have availed themselves only to a very small extent



of these advantages. The reports of the Poor Law Commissioners show that in the year 1835-6, about 5000 emigrants were sent out under their authority: in the next year (in consequence, probably, of better employment at home), only 1200: in the year 1837-8, only 800. I am far from thinking that in this respect all is done which it would be desirable for the national welfare to effect. However sceptical we may be as to the results of an extended and general emigration, its beneficial consequences in particular localities, when accompanied by good management in other respects, are evident enough. It is remarkable how small an amount of it, together with the adoption of good regulations, has been found in a few years to produce a material revolution in the rates, and improvement in the condition of the poor in particular places. In the parish of Ewhurst in Sussex, the population increased from 840 in 1801 to 1220 in 1821; in 1831 it amounted to 1200 only, having been kept down by the emigration of about 100 labourers in the interval. The rates in 1822 had been 3370*l.*; in 1832 they had fallen to 1630*l.*: this, be it observed, was before the new act.\* There were in the latter year no super-numerary labourers, of which the strongest proof is to be found in the fact, that the rector of the parish having offered small allotments of land to the labourers at a low rate, was able to let three acres only: the offer of nine had been rejected.† Such instances as this certainly appear to indicate that much might have been

\* Report of the Poor Law Commissioners for 1834.

† On the other hand I am informed, that the number of emigrants from the parishes of the Rye Union, of which the population is about 12,000, has amounted in the last few years to nearly 1000; and that no perceptible effect has been produced on the progress of numbers.

done before the new enactment, to restore a healthy state of the labour market in many localities by a spirited system of emigration; and, doubtless, there are still similar cases. But on the whole, the infinitely small extent to which parochial emigration has been carried, notwithstanding the present facilities for it, seems to indicate that there cannot be such a need of it as to call on government to take it in hand at the expense of the nation.

But there is another part of our kingdom of which the condition is said to call still more loudly for the relief of extensive and systematic emigration under government assistance. In my lectures on the subject of poor laws for Ireland, I had occasion to dwell at some length on this proposition. I then referred my hearers to the work of Colonel Torrens on the subject, and to the suggestion of the Commission of the Irish Poor Law Inquiry, and exposed, at some length, my reasons for hesitating to agree with those authorities, both as to the results and the practicability of such an expedient. It is impossible, within my present limits, to do more than very briefly to recapitulate my former reasoning.

In Ireland a far more stimulating and pernicious bounty on population, than that afforded by the English poor laws, has been for centuries applied—namely, the subdivision and subletting of land. By far the greatest proportion of the labour, and a very large part of the capital, of that country has thus been diverted from all other employments to that of raising necessities for small cultivators, each obtaining only the lowest quantity on which life can be sustained after payment of his rent. Two-fifths of the people, or nearly 3,000,000 souls, appear to consist of cottiers and their families, cultivating their own small holdings. Besides

these, there is a proportion of landless labourers who subsist on wages and have constant employment, and another portion differently estimated by different calculators, but probably amounting to some hundred thousand, who are either destitute—that is, mainly supported by charity, or, at least, unable to support themselves throughout the whole year by their own exertions.

Now, in order to remedy the evils of the cottier system, almost all economists are agreed that it is desirable to introduce that mode of cultivation by combined capital and labour—that is, with larger holdings, greater skill, and fewer hands—with all practicable expedition. But it is evident, from the very nature of such a process, that it must be extremely gradual. Were it possible to remove whole bodies of the existing cultivators at once, it must take time to import capital, and still more to create skill. Suppose, then, that while the importation of capital is as yet in its infancy, a million of cottiers, or one-third of the whole, as Colonel Torrens would propose, were at once transferred to America. What would be the consequence? Merely that one-third of the land would remain uncultivated. That third would eventually be the most barren. The landlords of the more fertile soils, whenever these happened to be depopulated by the emigration, would be able to invite hands from the less fertile by the offer of a slight remission of rent. Things would remain, at the end of the experiment, precisely where they were before, except that the number of cottiers would be smaller, and their condition a little better. That the natural progress of population would soon bring them back to the former number—there being no sufficient motive to any alter-

ation of habits on their part — is most certain. In no class, perhaps, is the tendency to keep up or augment their number so strong as in that of small cultivators. It is said that, from the Isle of Skye, out of 11,000 inhabitants, 8000 were carried away by emigration in 1755 and a few following years; and yet, that, before the end of the next generation, the number had reached more than its first amount. Ireland, on the supposition which I have just made, would only exhibit the phenomenon of Skye on a larger scale.

With respect to the *destitute*, and to the *landless*, labourers of Ireland, the case is somewhat different. The removal of the former (supposing it possible, and leaving the expense out of the question) would of course leave things as they were, except that industry would be relieved from that tax which it now pays for their maintenance in the shape of charity or poor's rates. As to the *landless but not destitute* labourers, it seems undeniable that the removal of any large number of them must tend to raise the rate of wages in Ireland. With a somewhat higher rate of wages, cottiers would be enticed from the cultivation of their own small holdings to enter the class of labourers for hire in lieu of those thus removed. Thus far it would appear that the country would gain by the process. But here another difficulty presents itself. Although labourers receive but very low wages in Ireland, it does not appear that productive labour is ill-remunerated; that a less share of the produce of labour falls to the labourer than in other countries. The same amount of wages advanced will not, in most employments, secure a greater quantity of work done in Ireland than in England. The Irishman who receives only one-third

of the daily gains of the Englishman, does, generally speaking, not more than one-third of the work. Supposing, therefore, that wages were suddenly raised in Ireland without any increase of the productive powers of labour, the capitalist would necessarily be placed at a disadvantage. It is true that the productiveness of labour would eventually be increased; better fed and better paid, the energies of the workman would be augmented: but what is to become of capital in the meantime? On the first rise of wages, it will immediately tend to disappear, and seek employment elsewhere; and the labourers will consequently be driven to underbid each other, and return to their former rate of wages again. *The rise of real wages, in any state of society, must be gradual to be permanent.\**

Such are the objections, very briefly stated, which seem to suggest themselves to schemes of wholesale emigration. I have noticed these schemes, partly on account of the favour with which some high authorities have regarded them, partly on account of their being constantly put forward, in popular oratory and publications, among the many other economical nostrums for the grievances of society, which are so glibly enumerated by those who have never spent an hour in endeavouring to examine their real worth and applicability. Were we dealing with what is practical only, our attention

\* Another reason against the practicability of very extensive emigration, is to be found in the fact that those persons who are desirable as emigrants, are precisely those best able to find employment at home in difficult times — the young, industrious, and well-conducted.—See a remarkable passage in a dispatch of the Land and Emigration Commissioners (*Report*, 1840, p. 14.) as to the effect which would ensue if parties were allowed to send out as emigrants those they are most interested in removing; namely, the unfortunates who are nearly useless at home.

would have been thrown away. There is no reasonable probability of this country ever submitting—as no other country has ever yet submitted—to the enormous expense which would be required to carry any really great experiment of emigration into effect. And, as I have noticed on a former occasion, the cost of extensive emigration is by no means fairly estimated by merely multiplying the expense now incurred in conveying small parties by the proposed number of emigrants. The expense of shipping, of seamen, of location in the colony, all these, and probably many other items, must, it should seem, of necessity augment in a greater ratio, in consequence of the greatly augmented demand.\*

With its present means, government can do little; but that little may be employed to considerable ends. It has now a certain fund for this purpose, although as yet a small one; namely, that derived from the sale of lands in some of the Australian colonies. The statistics of this part of the subject will be considered elsewhere. Parishes are now required to pay the expenses of their emigrants when sent to Australia (to which, alone,

\* I say little here of a still greater difficulty—that of settling large bodies of emigrants in a new country. That subject will come more probably under discussion on another occasion. But it is strange to observe how completely it appears to be forgotten by the advocates of wholesale emigration. This very year, there has been a proposal for the removal at once of about 30,000 Highlanders from the Western Island, without distinction of age or sex. And we have been told, that the expense of *conveying* each individual would amount to about 3*l.* only! Now the Emigration Committee of 1827 estimated that the cost of *carrying and locating* a poor family on new land amounted to 60*l.*! and this is probably rather a low calculation.—See various estimates in *Murray's British America*, vol. iii. p. 148.

But the objection of expense is as nothing compared with the embarrassment, the distress, the frightful mortality which attend large and ill-considered projects of emigration. There is much more need to check than to encourage the rage for it which sometimes prevails among the peasantry of particular districts, especially in Ireland.

the government emigration is at present directed), as far as the ship; the remainder is paid by the treasury. Supposing the funds to admit of it, I cannot but think that good might be done in Ireland, and in some parts even of Great Britain, by loans on easy terms to proprietors who are anxious to assist their tenants to emigrate, with a view to what is called in Ireland clearing their estates—a process associated, unfortunately, in our minds with the notion of a cruel and reckless abuse of the rights of property; and yet one most essentially necessary to its prosperity, and which it should be the object both of the owner and the government to render a source of advantage instead of suffering to the poor tenants who are the first affected by it. It has been also proposed of late, that parishes in England should be presented with a certain quantity of waste land in the colonies, to be vested in the guardians of each parish, and used by them as a permanent site for the establishment of persons willing to emigrate from it. But there are various practical objections to a scheme which appears to have captivated some imaginations. It would increase the evil already existing to so great an extent in our colonies, of interposing unsettled lands in the hands of absentee proprietors between settled districts. And the mere location of parish paupers on waste land, as I shall again and again have occasion to shew, is not relief. There is no part of our wide colonial empire in which small settlers without capital have a reasonable prospect of immediate success. It is far better for emigrants of this description to begin their course as labourers, and be absorbed gradually into the population.

While we are engaged on this part of our subject, it remains to inquire, very briefly, into the modes which have been proposed to remunerate the mother country

for these first expenses of colonization. Mr. Wakefield, in his able pamphlet on colonization (1830), enumerates two different methods, as having been chiefly followed in the course of the experiments which we have made in this science in the last two hundred years. By the first of these, a free passage is provided for emigrants, who on their arrival are indented, as apprenticed labourers, to settlers, who are bound to pay for them a certain remuneration to the government. This is equivalent to a tax on wages in the colony ; and it has been proposed to raise a similar tax by direct levy from the labourers themselves, by attaching a part of their wages. The second is, the exaction of a rent from emigrants located on government land ; which, in the first stage of society, amounts to a tax on profits. There appears in theory no objection to either of these modes, provided the tax were not sufficiently heavy to interfere with industry. But both have been found impracticable. In the earlier history of our American possessions, the difficulty of holding indented emigrants to their bonds was so great, as to lead to the well known system of kidnapping in England for the plantations, which subsisted up to the American revolution. The attempt to draw a quit-rent from lands, only led to "squatting ;" that is, unauthorized occupation ; and the exhaustion and abandonment of farms. In fact, these and similar schemes are all too inconsistent with that "mera libertas," which seems the great prerogative of early settlements, to produce any beneficial results. A third mode of making colonization pay for itself, as it is termed, has been within these few years put in practice : it is that of raising a fund for the purpose of emigration, by the sale of lands within the colony. I shall have occasion to recur more than once to this great experiment, both the theory and the results of which



will demand our serious attention, when we come to investigate the progress of colonies. But with reference to that part of our subject on which we are now engaged, I can only observe in passing, that to term this scheme a mode of replacing the capital expended by the mother country on emigration is a fallacy. It is merely a mode of repaying government, or the party selling, at the expense of some one else. The greatest proportion of the land is bought in England. By far the greater part of it is bought on speculation, and with English capital. Some of the remainder is purchased by an advance of English capital, to be repaid at some future period by the resources of the colony. The effect of the whole transaction, in nine purchases out of ten, amounts to this—that the English settler, who has to export a certain quantity of capital in order to commence operations, has also to transfer another portion to government by way of price. A fairer, or more unobjectionable, tax on speculation can hardly be devised; but it is a strange misnomer to term it a repayment of the national expenditure. “Unless a plan of finance is “in the nature of a commercial undertaking, it cannot “give government more than it takes away, either from “individuals or from government itself, under some “other form. Something cannot be made out of nothing by the mere stroke of a wand.\*

But the capital sunk in well directed emigration is speedily replaced with interest by a far surer process than the ingenuity of financiers or economists can invent. Wherever England plants a colony, she founds a nation of customers. Already, in return for the slight expense which has attended the removal of a few of her

\* Ricardo, p. 317.

less fortunate inhabitants from her shores, she receives the profits of the trade of a vast confederacy, which these outcasts have raised to an equality with the proudest empires of the earth. And the extraordinary progress of her recent colonies justifies us in hoping that empires as vast and wealthy still remain to be founded, and new branches of commerce as extensive and as prosperous to be created.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE V.

## No. I.

GENERAL TABLE of the Number of Emigrants, for Twenty Years, from the United Kingdom, with their Destinations.—From the Reports at the Custom House, and of the Emigration Agents.

Years.	N. American Colonies.	United States.	West Indies.	Cape of Good Hope.	Australian Colonies.	Convicts.
1821	12,470	-	1,772	404	Free. —	—
1822	11,282	-	1,423	192	485	—
1823	8,133	-	1,911	184	903	—
1824	7,311	-	1,353	119	715	—
1825	8,741	5,551	1,082	114	1,056	1,313
1826	12,818	7,063	1,913	116	2,016	1,511
1827	12,648	14,526	1,156	114	1,242	2,642
1828	12,084	12,817	1,211	135	1,561	3,271
1829	13,307	15,678	1,251	197	3,793	4,023

1830	30,574	24,887	-	-	204	2,800	4,133
1831	58,067	23,418	-	-	114	1,860	3,971
1832	66,339	32,872	-	-	196	3,733	4,229
1833	28,808	29,109	-	-	517	4,093	4,551
1834	40,060	33,074	-	-	288	2,800	4,920
1835	15,573	26,720	-	-	325	1,860	4,399
1836	34,226	37,774	-	-	293	3,124	4,273
1837	29,884	36,770	-	-	326	5,054	4,068
1838	4,557	14,332	-	-	292	Sydney.	...
1839	12,658	33,536	-	-	227	10,189	
1840	27,025	38,495	1,938	513	7,811	8,455	
						Van D. Land.	
						571	
						328	
						281	
						Western Australia.	
						115	
						268	
						233	
						3,201	
						2,911	
						3,154	
						5,316	
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## No. II.

TABLE of Emigrants arrived at New York, in Canada, and New Brunswick.

Years.	New York.	Canada.	New Brunswick.
1829	11,501	15,945	
1830	21,433	28,000	
1831	22,607	50,254	
1832	28,283	51,746	
1833	16,100	21,752	3,952
1834	26,540	30,935	6,178
1835	16,749	12,527	3,307
1836	59,075	27,722	5,886
1837	34,000	21,901	
1838	13,059	2,938	
1839	24,376	7,261	3,103
1840	- -	23,190	7,777

\* \* This table is subjoined on account of the variations which it presents from the former. The reports of emigrants at the places of arrival contain generally much larger numbers than those made up at home. It will be seen, for instance, that in the year 1840, 30,967 emigrants appear to have arrived in Canada and New Brunswick only, while the whole emigration to the North American provinces is only estimated in my first table at 27,025. The reason of this appears to be that vessels, after leaving their principal port, often pick up a considerable number of emigrants in coasting. With respect to the emigration to the United States, I believe the British returns do not contain those who go out in American ships.

## No. III.

AVERAGE Annual Emigration of the Six Years, from 1832 to 1837; showing the proportion of Emigrants from different parts of the United Kingdom.

	N. A. Colonies.	United States.	Cape of G. H.	Australian Colonies.	Total.
England and Wales -	8,830	26,849	318	2,808	38,805
Scotland -	4,586	1,977	7	342	6,912
Ireland -	22,399	3,893	- -	294	26,586
Total -	35,815	32,719	325	3,444	72,303

\* \* Report of the Agent-General for Emigration, 1839.

But if 14,000 of the average annual emigrants from Liverpool are Irish, the total number of English will be about 25,000, and Irish 40,000.

## No. IV.

## ANALYSIS OF THE EMIGRATION OF 1840,

From those ports of the Kingdom in which there are Government Agents.

	North American Colonies.	United States.	West Indies.	Cape of Good Hope.	Sydney.	Port Philip.	V. Die- men's Land.	Western Austra- lia.	Southern Australia.	New Zealand.	Total.
From England and Wales -	6,817	34,025	1,697	490	7,352	2,984	281	233	2,412	1,147	57,638
Scotland -	750	627	316	23	265	217	-	-	134	191	2,473
Ireland -	19,458	3,593	25	-	194	-	-	-	365	-	23,635
Total -	27,025	38,495	1,938	513	7,811	3,201	281	233	2,911	1,338	83,746

N. B. These tables of emigration are compiled from different government reports. For the account of 1840, I have to thank Mr. Elliot, lately agent-general for emigration, and now one of the commissioners of the Land and Emigration Board.

## LECTURE VI.

EFFECTS OF THE EXPORTATION OF CAPITAL, WHICH TAKES PLACE IN THE PROCESS OF COLONIZING, ON THE WEALTH OF THE MOTHER COUNTRY.

THE next subject which requires our attention is not perhaps of much practical importance, but interesting to the scientific inquirer, namely, the effects produced upon the amount and distribution of wealth at home by that export of capital which takes place in colonization. Few families leave the shores of their native country in so destitute a condition as to carry along with them no portion of the accumulated wealth of that country: many are in comparatively easy circumstances, and anxious to realize as much of their property as they can readily turn to account, in order to assist their industry in the new region which they are about to inhabit. This they partly do by carrying away with them valuable articles, more extensively by means of credit, that is, by reserving a title to receive on demand a certain quantity of English produce or its equivalent. A colonist in Canada or New South Wales draws a bill on England for 100l.: England is bound to send out that amount in gold and silver; but gold and silver are only procurable by England through the medium of her own exportable commodities, that is, the produce of her manufactures. The transaction therefore comes in effect to this,—that England has to export, without return, an hundred pounds' worth of her cottons, her hardware, or whatever may be the commodities for which she can command a market. So much ca-

pital, therefore, is taken out of the country by the transaction.

Let us now trace the result, supposing the drawer to belong to what is commonly called the productive class in society. The small farmer or manufacturer has a stock consisting of accumulated savings, on which he trades, and by which he sets in motion a certain quantity of productive labour. He converts that stock into credit for the purpose of emigration, that is, he carries with him the power of giving orders, by means of which the equivalent of that stock in gold and silver, that is, in British manufactures, may be transferred at such times and in such portions as may suit him, to the spot of his new residence. But the same result follows equally, although not so directly, if the emigrant belong to what is commonly called the class of consumers. Suppose his fortune to be invested in government funds, he possesses, under the guarantee of the nation, a right to demand either a certain quantity of the capital of the country—of that stock which, while it remains in the hands of the farmer and the manufacturer, serves to bring into existence the annual income of the country, or a fixed portion of that annual income. So long as he remains in the country, he spends that portion of its proceeds unproductively, as it is termed. Let us attend for a moment to the meaning of the phrase. A portion of the annual produce of the country is made over to the fundholder in right of his claim on government, under the form of a sum of money. As has been stated before, money, in every country, may be fairly taken to represent the exportable commodities of that country by which alone money can be procured. Let us therefore regard the income of the fundholder simply as so many bales of cotton. He exchanges a portion of that cotton for English agricultural produce, on which he



feeds ; gives some, in wages, to members of the English labouring class as menial servants ; probably gives a portion, as rent, to the owner of the spot on which he resides ; another portion, and perhaps by far the largest, he exchanges for articles of luxury and convenience, which he procures at the cheapest market to which our fiscal regulations will allow him to go, regardless whether they have been produced by the Englishman or the foreigner. He procures all these by exchanging for them the bales of cotton of which we have supposed his income to consist. Now if, in removing to a foreign country or a colony, he were to continue to draw only his annual income, the loss sustained by this country would merely amount to that portion of the income which, residing at home, he would have exchanged for labour or commodities produced at home, and which, when he resides abroad, is exchanged for labour or commodities produced abroad. He will consume food produced abroad instead of food produced at home ; I mean such articles of food as it is cheaper in every country to raise than to import, leaving duties out of the question. The owner of the house which he rented in England will lose his rent, the amount of which the emigrant will have to pay to a foreign landlord. A certain amount of goods, which would have been given to English servants as wages, or to English workmen who serve to supply ordinary wants—carpenters, masons, &c.—will be given to foreigners. *The whole quantity of goods which he had while in England exchanged for these various services, will go abroad in the first instance.* That portion of his cotton which he exchanges for articles of luxury and convenience, will be used just as it was before, whether he consumes it at London, Paris, or Sydney, except so far only as the expense of carriage may affect the price of a few com-

modities, rendering the home-made article, though intrinsically dearer than the foreign one, yet cheaper to the home consumer.

But how would the English landlord have spent that portion of the goods which he would have received as rent if the emigrant had remained at home? To answer this, we must go again through the analysis which has been given of the consumption of the emigrant himself. So again of the servants, the retail dealers, the masons, plasterers, and carpenters. Each of them would expend that portion of his customer's goods which he receives, in buying with them necessities and comforts at the cheapest market. Whether they are Englishmen or Frenchmen, they will all alike, if exchequer laws allow them, spend a portion in English manufactures; a portion in agricultural produce, grown abroad or grown at home, as it comes cheapest; a portion in rewarding the services of other labourers, who again will expend their portion according to the same analysis. Therefore, in all cases, the encouragement given to the productive industry of any country by the expenditure of an income at home, will be found, on examination, to exist only in those few instances in which the difference of cost by reason of carriage induces the buyer to resort to the home instead of the foreign market. But the effect of taxes on goods imported from foreign countries will modify these results to a certain extent, and render absenteeism a little more injurious.

This I believe to be the true solution of that puzzling question concerning the effects of absenteeism which has exercised the ingenuity of so many writers, and respecting which the disciples of the school of Smith and Ricardo have been accused of venting so much paradox and absurdity. When the question is asked,

Whether a country loses by the absenteeism of a landed proprietor or fixed annuitant? I apprehend that it will be impossible to answer the question, unless the disputants are agreed upon the meaning of the word "loss." I place out of the argument all the effects of taxation, whether prohibitive or merely for the purpose of revenue, in order not to complicate the question. Suppose, then (all taxation apart), that all the gentry of England—or of any district of England—were to emigrate. If they, and the whole number of servants and workmen of different classes, and retail dealers, and professional men, who must emigrate along with them or lose their custom here, were to resort abroad to the same markets respectively for almost all their articles of consumption, to which they would have resorted if they had continued to live at home; and by following out the analysis which I have briefly indicated, you will find that the course of trade would eventually compel them to do so, were it not for international restrictions; there would be very nearly the same quantity of capital productively employed, and the same quantity of annual produce as before. But if inhabitants dwelling and consuming their wealth in any country or district are themselves to be regarded as a portion of its substance, then the district would be so much the poorer. The enjoyment of riches, as well as their production, forms part of the national well-being. If Hyde Park were to be deserted by all its splendid array of equipages, it would hardly be a misnomer to say that the wealth of London was diminished. And yet, so far as productive industry is concerned, if a carriage is built in Long Acre, it matters nothing whether its owner display it in Hyde Park, or in the Bois de Boulogne, or on the Esplanade at Calcutta.\*

\* See Malthus's Political Economy, book, ii. chap. 1. sec. 6.

But in considering this question, we are digressing from the subject before us ; for, in point of fact, men do not emigrate to colonies in order to subsist there upon their income derived from capital in England. They carry their capital along with them. The fundholder converts his claim on the state into ready money for exportation ; and, in doing so, he does, in effect, subtract a portion of the capital stock of the country, just in the same way as the emigrant farmer or tradesman, whose capital was employed in production. For although he (the fundholder) did not employ his capital productively, it was, in point of fact, so employed by some one else to whom he had lent it, and from whom he must now withdraw it.

The question therefore is, Whether every subtraction from the fund for the maintenance of labour is necessarily injurious to the well-being of society ?

The argument on the affirmative side seems to be fairly stated by Colonel Torrens\*, although that writer embraces the contrary view :—

“ The power and wealth of every country is in  
“ proportion to the number of its people, and to the  
“ amount of the capital which affords them employ-  
“ ment. When labour and capital are abstracted, for  
“ the purpose of establishing a new colony, the aggre-  
“ gate power and wealth of the mother country must  
“ be diminished in the same degree in which the pros-  
“ perity of the new settlement is advanced ; while the  
“ condition of the reduced population remaining in the  
“ mother country, instead of being improved, may be  
“ impaired. The well-being of the people, the amount  
“ of real wages which they can earn, depends upon the  
“ proportion between labour and capital. If, in the

\* Colonization of South Australia, part ii.

“ establishment of new colonies, we subtract labour and  
“ capital in equal proportions, the labourers who remain  
“ in the mother country will receive exactly the same  
“ wages as before. And if, as is most probable, the first  
“ establishment of a new colony should cause capital to  
“ be withdrawn in a greater proportion than labour,  
“ then, in the mother country, wages would not even  
“ remain stationary, but would be actually reduced.  
“ Colonization, while it must, as a strictly necessary  
“ consequence, diminish the aggregate power and wealth  
“ of the parent state, may, as a highly probable con-  
“ sequence, reduce the demand for labour in a greater  
“ proportion than it reduces the supply; and thus de-  
“ teriorate, instead of improving, the condition of the  
“ dustrious classes remaining in the mother country.”

Thus far Colonel Torrens, stating, as I have said, the argument to which he afterwards replies. It is obvious that this argument rests entirely on the position, that there can be no redundancy of capital at any time in any country, and no general glut of commodities; a position, as some of my hearers may be aware, which is much debated among economists, and which has given rise to some of the profoundest reasonings in the science.

It was the opinion of Adam Smith, that the fall of profits which generally takes place in the progress of society, and as countries increase in wealth and civilization, was a consequence of the accumulation of capital, and of its competition in all the different trades and businesses carried on in the same community. This opinion was controverted by Mr. Ricardo and his followers. According to Ricardo, no permanent lowering of profits can take place, except through some cause which permanently raises wages. Using the words “ lower ” and “ raise ” as he always uses them, that is, in a relative sense, this is obvious enough. If the whole

produce of industry be divided between profits and wages, nothing can lower the one without in the same proportion raising the other. And he denies that any accumulation of capital can produce this effect, except in certain cases which he afterwards mentions.\* “ If  
“ the funds for the maintenance of labour were doubled,  
“ trebled, or quadrupled, there would not long be any  
“ difficulty in procuring the requisite number of hands  
“ to be employed by those funds. . . . Demand is only  
“ limited by production. No man produces but with a  
“ view to consume or sell ; and he never sells but with  
“ an intention to purchase some other commodity, which  
“ may be immediately useful to him, or which may  
“ contribute to future production. By producing, then,  
“ he necessarily becomes either the consumer of his own  
“ goods, or the purchaser and consumer of the goods of  
“ some other person. It is not to be supposed that he  
“ should, for any length of time, be ill-informed of the  
“ commodities which he can most advantageously pro-  
“ duce, to attain the object which he has in view,  
“ namely, the possession of other goods ; and therefore  
“ it is not probable that he will continually produce a  
“ commodity for which there is no demand. There  
“ cannot then be accumulated in a country any amount  
“ of capital which cannot be employed productively,  
“ until wages rise so high in consequence of the rise of  
“ necessaries, and so little consequently remains for the  
“ profits of stock, that the motive for accumulation  
“ ceases.”

In other words, as Mr. Ricardo's principle has been briefly expressed, the increase of capital is, in itself, sufficient to increase the field of employment, and the demand for labour. And it obviously follows, that

\* Principles of Political Economy, p. 400.

competition between capitalists, which Adam Smith considered as the chief cause of a low rate of profits, can have no effect in lowering profits at all. It cannot in any way affect the productiveness of industry. In the words of Mr. M'Culloch \*, " All that competition " can do, and all that it ever does, is to reduce the " profit obtained in different businesses and employ- " ments to the same common level, to prevent par- " ticular individuals realising greater or lesser profits " than their neighbours. Farther than this, compe- " tition cannot go. The common and average rate " of profit depends not on it, but on the excess of the " produce obtained by employing capital, after it is re- " placed along with every contingent expense. Com- " petition cannot affect the productiveness of industry : " neither can it, speaking generally, affect the rate of " wages ; for, such as the ordinary demand for labour " is, such will be its supply, and it has no influence " over taxation. It is plain, therefore, that it has no- " thing to do with the determination of the common " and average rate of profit. It prevents individuals " from getting more or less than this common rate ; " but it has no farther effect."

It might, perhaps, not be difficult to reconcile these conflicting authorities, were it not for the opposite practical consequences which have been deduced from their doctrines. Let it be conceded, upon Mr. Ricardo's principle, that no other cause being given for the lowering of profits and raising of wages, mere competition among the capitalists cannot have that effect. But the question is, whether under the actual circumstances of society, there being always a natural limit, close at hand, to the employment of capital at that rate

\* Note to A. Smith's " Wealth of Nations," p. 477.

of profit which now prevails, competition has not the effect of forcing capital to pass that limit, and inducing its possessor to be content with a continually lower and lower rate of profit, until the boundary is reached at which, in Mr. Ricardo's language, "so little is left for the profits of stock, that the motive for accumulation altogether ceases."

Now, in every country raising raw produce, the limit in question to the employment of capital at the existing rate of profit is, as Mr. Ricardo himself has most conclusively shown, the extent of the worst soil at present in cultivation. Let us, therefore, suppose that the increase of population has so far increased the value of raw produce, that is to say, its exchangeable value as compared with other commodities, that the same amount of value will be obtained by the capitalist, by applying his capital to a fresh and inferior soil, which he now obtains from the better. This will, perhaps, be more clearly explained by an instance:—

Let the capital of a farmer amount to 100*l.*, with which he raises 55 quarters of wheat, at 40*s.* a quarter. The total return is 110*l.*; of this let 80*l.*, or the equivalent of 40 quarters, have been spent in wages; 15 quarters remain to the capitalist. Let 20*l.* replace capital expended in other ways; then 10*l.* equal to 5 quarters, or 10 per cent. on the capital advanced, is left as net profit. Rent is left for the present out of the question. Now, suppose the price of wheat to rise to 42*s.* the quarter. Let the next quality of land be such, that, to produce the same quantity of wheat, with the same advance of capital, will require the expenditure of an additional quarter of wheat in wages to additional labourers. The labourers now obtain 41 quarters, which, at the price of 42*s.* per quarter, amount to 86*l.* 4*s.* Fourteen quarters only



are left to the capitalist : price 29*l.* 16*s.* Thus, supposing the cost of replacing stock to be the same as before, or 20*l.*, there remains 9*l.* 16*s.*, or within a fraction of 10 per cent. as profits. But 9*l.* 16*s.*, at 42*s.* a quarter, represents only 4 quarters and a little more than five-sevenths of a quarter. Thus, by the supposition, the *rate* of profit remains the same, or 10 per cent., although the *value* both of capital and profit, as estimated in corn, is diminished.

In order to simplify the calculation, I have supposed the rate of wages to remain unaltered. It is, however, the more probable supposition, under the circumstances stated, that it would fall. The same increase of population, which raises the price of corn, so as to occasion the resort to inferior soil, would be accompanied by competition among labourers for employment. Out of the diminished return to industry, they would obtain a diminished share. As, therefore, wages would be less than heretofore, we may suppose, that the capitalist would find it possible to obtain the same rate of profit by the cultivation of such soil at a somewhat less increase of price than that which I have supposed ; say 41*s.* instead of 42*s.*

But, by what means is the capitalist enabled to extend his business, and bring fresh soil under cultivation ? By the employment of capital previously idle ; for, by the supposition, it could not have been employed at a less rate of profit than 10 per cent. Whence does he obtain that capital ? By accumulation : by savings out of former profits. Suppose the capitalist, on the rise of the price of corn, were to refrain from cultivating fresh soil, and allow his savings to remain idle : what must be the consequence ? Necessarily, a rise of profits. He would obtain, say 11, instead of 10, per cent. for his investment, wages falling, by reason of the sup-

posed increase of population, or even remaining the same. What then induces him to undertake that cultivation? The desire to employ a larger amount of capital, although at a lower rate of profit. It is better for him to employ 200*l.* at 10 per cent., than to employ 100*l.* at 11 per cent., and spend 100*l.* unproductively. But precisely the same motive will operate to induce him to employ his accumulations, even although instead of yielding, as in the example already adduced, the same rate of profit as heretofore, they should produce him a lower rate. Suppose the capitalist to have accumulated savings, lying idle in his hands; the existing rate of profit is 10 per cent., but all the soil which will yield such a profit is occupied; it is practicable to obtain 9 per cent. by the cultivation of fresh soil; the very same motive which operated in the former case will operate in this: as soon as the capitalist feels it better to employ a larger capital at a smaller rate, than a smaller at a higher rate, he will do so; and consequently, by the necessary force of competition, will bring down the average rate of profit in the cultivation of the soil to that amount with which he himself chooses to be satisfied.

This is one mode in which competition operates to lower profits. It does so, because industry is necessarily less and less productive, as population and wealth advance (temporary exceptions, arising out of improvements in productive industry, left out of the question); and because the tendency of men in a prosperous state of society, to accumulate and to employ their capital, is continually driving them to extend their business, although new undertakings must be carried on with less profit. It is this cause which produces that low rate of profit which all observers have remarked as characterizing communities far advanced in opulence, and

which renders a continual lowering of profits compatible with a continued advance in national industry and activity, up to a certain point ; that is, up to the point at which accumulation ceases to be profitable from the diminished return — a point which may be practically unattainable.

It is scarcely necessary to remind you, that the first cause, namely, the limited extent of productive soil, operates not only on the profits of capital used in agricultural production, but on the profits of all capital whatever. Profits cannot fall in one branch of industry, without the occurrence of a corresponding fall in all other branches, for no one will continue to be content with a lower rate of profit if he can obtain a higher. And thus it follows as a necessary consequence, that the increase of capital is not in itself sufficient to increase the field for its employment and the demand for labour. If the limit has been already reached at which that capital can be profitably employed, any farther saving out of its returns must be spent unproductively or left idle.

But if these propositions, plain and elementary as they appear, are once admitted, the question respecting the beneficial or mischievous nature of the exportation of capital seems to be answered. Suppose that society has arrived exactly at the point just now supposed ; namely, at which the capitalist will be tempted to employ his accumulations at a reduced rate of profit, rather than allow them to remain idle. If at this moment another field for the employment of labour present itself — if in Australia or in Canada he can realize remuneration sufficient to induce him to remove it there — it is obvious that while he consults his own advantage by so removing it, the mother country is benefited by the warding off, for a time, of that fall in

the rate of profit which must have ensued, had he contented himself with employing it at home. And who is ignorant that this is the point towards which English industry is continually gravitating? that notwithstanding all that energy and ingenuity can do towards increasing the productiveness of labour, we have before us the prospect of a continually increasing accumulation of capital, with a continually diminishing rate of profit in the employment of it?

It is answered, however, that the result to which I here advert cannot follow in a country freely importing food. Competition cannot then drive capital to the inferior soils, because the supplies required can be derived from abroad. Here then, it is said, the principle of Mr. Ricardo applies; and it is impossible that mere competition can lower the rate of profit.

Supposing the proportion of capital and labour to remain unaltered, this may be the case. Let us suppose capital to have accumulated in any particular branch of trade supplying a foreign market, so that there is some of it unemployed and seeking for investment, say in the cotton trade. Let us suppose that a bale of cotton, of a given size, will now exchange for eleven hogsheads of French wine; that out of these one hogshead goes to the capitalist, ten to pay wages; that the rate of profit is 10 per cent. The owner of the accumulated capital must be content with a less return, if he seek to employ his additional capital in the same business; he must be content, that is, to obtain less wine for his cotton. Suppose this competition carried to such an excess that the cotton exported exchanges only against half the quantity of wine which it did before; or, in other words, its price falls to one half its former amount in the French market, and the return is only five and a half hogsheads for the bale of cotton which formerly

sold for eleven. But if the number of labourers has, at the same time, increased in such a proportion that their services can be commanded for one half the wages which they cost before, then the *rate* of profit will remain unaltered. The capitalist now only gets half a hogshead in lieu of a whole one; the labourers, five in lieu of ten; but their respective proportions of the whole return are the same.

Now it admits of easy proof, that if the competition of capitalists could produce such an effect in a single branch of industry, supposing that to be the only one in which the community was engaged, it would produce the same in all its branches of industry taken collectively. The result would be, that English labour and skill would command less return in the foreign market: they would produce less exchangeable value: the mass of commodities, the amount of the comforts and conveniences of life enjoyed in England would diminish; but the rate of profit would not fall. If the progress of population caused the competition among labourers to be greater than that among capitalists, it might even rise. Whether such a state of things as I have here described is probable, is another matter; but I cannot see that its theoretical possibility can be contested.

But let us put another case, and suppose that the capitalist who wishes to employ his savings in the cotton manufacture, does not find labourers willing to accept of a lower amount of wages. Suppose that, for every bale of cotton exported from England, ten hogsheads of wine must go to the labourers, because, in the existing state of the supply of labour, the competition among capitalists keeps wages up to that point. There remains no resource to the capitalist, but to be content with a lower rate of profit. He may, for instance, sell his bale of cotton for  $10\frac{1}{2}$  hogsheads instead of 11; in

which case profits will have fallen from 10 per cent. to 8 per cent. This reasoning appears equally incontrovertible. Mr. Ricardo, as we have seen, regards the supposition as nugatory ; he considers that the supply of labour could never be much in arrear of the increase of the funds for the employment of capital. Mr. Malthus differs from him so widely, that he regards the abundance or scantiness of capital, as compared with the labour which it employs, as a cause "having a powerful influence on profits." But however the question of fact may stand, thus much must be admitted at least in theory.

And a most important practical consequence follows ; for whether the effect of increased competition, under given circumstances, be to lower the price of exported articles, or to lower the rate of profits, it must, in either case, be advantageous to relieve that competition by opening new fields of employment for the capital thus in excess. Whether its abstraction prevents the value of English products abroad from falling, or the rate of profits from falling, or both, it must be beneficial to industry.

This is the view expressed, in somewhat different language, by Colonel Torrens, in the work already cited. "In a manufacturing and commercial country," he says, "importing raw produce, the field of employment, and the demand for labour, cannot be determined by the amount of capital ready to be invested in manufactures and commerce. In a country thus circumstanced, employment and wages will depend, not so much upon the amount of commercial and manufacturing capital, as upon the extent of the foreign market. If the foreign market does not extend, no increase of manufacturing capital can cause a beneficial increase of production, or a permanent advance

“ of wages. Indeed, an increase of manufacturing and  
“ commercial capital, unaccompanied by a proportionate  
“ extension of the foreign market, instead of being  
“ beneficial, might have a necessary tendency to lower  
“ the profits of trade, and to reduce the wages of la-  
“ bour.” \*

“ It is a fact, established by experience and univer-  
“ sally admitted, that, in an industrious country, savings  
“ may be made from incomes, and that capital may be  
“ increased ; and it is also a fact, established by experi-  
“ ence and universally admitted, that, in countries in dif-  
“ ferent states of improvement, capital may increase in  
“ different ratios. When, in England, the capital em-  
“ ployed in supplying cotton fabrics for the foreign  
“ market increases faster than the capital employed in  
“ foreign countries in raising the raw materials, by the  
“ expenditure of which cotton fabrics are prepared,  
“ then, as I have already stated, and as experience has  
“ too abundantly proved, the value of cotton fabrics, in  
“ relation to the elementary cost of production, will  
“ decline ; and, in the cotton trade, wages, or profits, or  
“ both, must come down. Now causes similar to those  
“ which produce these effects in the cotton trade may  
“ at the same time be producing similar effects in the  
“ silk trade, the woollen trade, and all the other branches  
“ of industry in which goods are made for foreign mar-  
“ kets. If the capital employed in preparing cotton  
“ goods for foreign markets increases faster than the  
“ capital employed in foreign countries in raising the  
“ materials of cotton goods, the capital employed in  
“ preparing woollen goods may, at the same time, be  
“ increasing faster than the capital employed in the  
“ growing of foreign materials. The like may occur in

\* Colonization of South Australia, p. 232.

“ all other trades. In all, manufacturing capital may increase faster than the foreign capital, which raises the materials of manufacture ; and thus, in all the departments of industry, supplying goods to the foreign markets, there may be contemporaneous overtrading, or a contemporaneous ‘ home competition,’ occasioning a general fall of prices, of profits and wages, want of employment, and distress.” \*

In these reasonings I think we shall concur ; and if this be so, then the abstraction of capital from productive industry may, under certain circumstances and for a certain time, be the most effectual mode of preventing a reduction of profit, and stimulating further accumulation. However paradoxical the doctrine may at first sight appear, it cannot but be thought that a change from saving to spending — from productive to unproductive expenditure — may sometimes operate to relieve national industry from temporary plethora or oppression. How far this can be the case, is one of the most difficult problems in political economy, and one of which, no doubt, no purely scientific solution can be given. Mr. Malthus has made this observation with respect to the enormous expenditure of British capital during the late war. † “ One of the strongest instances,” he says, “ of the truth of this remark, and a further proof of a singular resemblance in the laws that regulate the increase of population and of capital, is to be found in the rapidity with which the loss of capital is recovered during a war which does not interrupt commerce. The loans to government convert capital into revenue, and increase demand at the same time that they at first diminish the means of supply. The ne-

\* Colonization of South Australia, 242, 243.

† Political Economy, p. 329.



“cessary consequence must be an increase of profits. “This naturally increases both the power and the “reward of accumulation ; and if only the same habits “of saving prevail among the capitalists as before, the “recovery of the lost stock must be rapid, just for the “same kind of reason that the recovery of population “is so rapid after some great mortality.” The analogy in this passage may be rather rhetorical than accurate ; but the reasoning, I must confess, appears to me conclusive. The gross produce of the taxes, during twenty years of the late war, exceeded 1300 millions ; 600 additional millions were added to the funded debt. To take a single item of that expenditure, which may bring its character more distinctly before our eyes, the expenses incurred by this country, on account of the armies in the Peninsula, in 1812 and 1813, amounted to 31,767,000*l.*; of which 3,284,000*l.* was exported in bullion. If it were true, as some economists seem to imagine, that capital finds or makes the field for its own employment, then any abstraction of it from productive industry must diminish the resources of a country ; and in that case it is inconceivable in what manner these prodigious drains of her lifeblood could have been endured by the nation, not only without sinking under them, but with scarcely the slightest appearance of a diminution of her vital circulation and energy.

I have endeavoured, perhaps not very successfully, to give a succinct view of this important question ; a question touching on some of the most recondite provinces of economical inquiry, especially on the much debated argument respecting the possibility of a general glut or over-production. It is, however, as I have said, of little practical importance ; and that for two reasons : in the first place, when we reflect on the enormous expenditure which has been borne by this country in war—

on the profuse manner in which her treasures are lavished in peace on objects of national interest — on the vast portions of her annual revenue, which, instead of being accumulated to form fresh capital, are every year spent on the purposes of private luxury and magnificence — the minute fractions of her wealth, which are, or can be, devoted to such an object as colonization, sink into utter insignificance in the sum of her transactions. The utmost that she ever has done, or in all probability ever can do, in this way, would have no perceptible effect on her prosperity, even if the arguments of the Ricardo School of economists, to which I have already adverted, were true to their fullest extent. In the next place, the capital spent on colonization by a country exporting manufactures, is not wasted unproductively, or lost to the resources of the parent state. It is spent in founding a fresh market for her goods, and in stimulating a new and more intense demand for them. Let the whole of the capital, which was expended by England in the foundation of the North American colonies, be estimated at its fullest amount ; is it credible that the total annual increase of that capital, from their first settlement to the era of American independence, would amount to the income which England has derived in the last twenty years from the American cotton trade ?

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NOTE. — It is extremely difficult to form even an approximative conjecture of the quantity of capital withdrawn from an old country by emigrants. The following are a few scattered hints on the subject : —

Dégérando (*Bienf. Publique*, iv. 112.) says, that from 1828 to 1837, 14,365 emigrants from the lower Rhine carried with them 8,200,000 francs of capital ; that is, 630 francs or 25*l.* per head. 50,000 francs in gold were found on the person of an emigrant who died at Havre of cholera. — *Ibid.* 98. Mr. Buchanan thinks that the emigrants of 1834 to Canada carried out 1,000,000*l.* — *Porter's Progress of the Nation.*

The value of the imports into Canada, in 1835, was 2,300,000*l.*

currency ; the exports 1,800,000*l.* "The balance," says Mr. Murray (*British North America*, vol. ii. p. 39.), "is liquidated by the "funds brought into the colony by immigrants, by government expenditures, and by the transfer of capital from this country for "investment in the colony." Perhaps a part of the excess consisted of goods imported to be smuggled into the United States. But a similar calculation may be applied to other colonies. The imports into New South Wales have exceeded the exports from thence, for some years past, by 300,000*l.* or 400,000*l.* : the difference, probably, consists chiefly of capital exported from England by emigrants, or for government services. The same results will be observed in the statistics of the trade with all the colonies or foreign countries to which emigration takes place.

## LECTURE VII.

## ON COLONIAL TRADE AND THE "COLONIAL SYSTEM."

THE chief advantages of colonization to the mother country (economically speaking) are twofold: the opening of new sources of production, whence articles of necessity, conveniences, and luxury may be obtained more cheaply or more abundantly than heretofore from the unexhausted resources of a new soil; the opening new markets for the disposal of the commodities of the mother country, more profitable and more rapidly extending than those previously resorted to, by reason of the speedy growth of wealth in new communities. I have mentioned these two as separate advantages, in order to adopt, as far as possible, the popular language; yet, in point of fact, importation, not exportation, is the great interest of a country; not the disposal of her own commodities, but the obtaining other commodities in return. The first is only useful as a means to the last; and yet, it is singular to observe, how the latter object, that of importation, is overlooked in ordinary reasoning on the subject, as if the only benefit of colonies resulted to our producers—our merchants and manufacturers; and not to our consumers, that is, to the great bulk of the people. This strange omission is in reality the consequence of those very narrow views of commercial policy, which have become so inveterate by long indulgence, that even those who are convinced of their futility can scarcely shake off the prejudices

produced by them. Thus we constantly underrate those commercial benefits which are common to us with all the world, or which we only enjoy in a superior degree, in so far as superior industry and manufacturing advantages fairly command it. To suit our contracted notions of economical gain to a particular country, the gain in question must be something exclusive and monopolized. Now the plan of monopolizing the *productions* of colonies, or the imports from them, although undoubtedly a part of the ancient colonial system, is so difficult of execution, that it can scarcely be said to have been ever seriously put into operation, except in the ruinous policy of Spain and Portugal with regard to the precious metals, and the management of the spice trade by the Dutch. Our own endeavours to control in this manner the exports of our North American colonies, in the earlier period of the navigation laws were speedily abandoned as fruitless. Sugar, and coffee, and cotton, and tobacco, and the other staple products of colonial industry, have never been practically monopolized by any European power. Each has been able to obtain such a share of them as her own industry could procure, by offering articles in exchange for them; and hence these great accessions to our wealth and our comfort, because open to all, have never been rightly estimated by each as national benefits. On the other hand, since it has been found practicable to a certain extent, by fiscal regulations, to confine colonists to the use of the products of the mother country; and since, in all commercial history, we find that producers have ever been able to give to their own the semblance of the national voice, and make it appear that their gain, and not the comfort of the consumers, was the great object of economical legislation; public

attention has been almost exclusively directed to this part of the subject. Nothing is more common, even now, than to hear colonies spoken of as if they were only so many emporia, where certain quantities of cotton and hardware may be disposed of with advantage to the manufacturer and shipowner. That the poor man possesses additional articles of food and clothing, and many little comforts or enjoyments, which were unknown to his forefathers; that members of the richer and the middle classes, in return for the outlay of a similar proportion of their income, can indulge in many luxuries which were heretofore denied them — can surround themselves with a refinement and elegance heretofore unknown; these are, after all, the great primary benefits which the discovery of America and the spread of colonization have secured to us: and it is to a similar increase of our physical well-being that we ought to look as the chief economical advantage to be derived to us from its farther extension.

The increase of the demand for products of national industry is a good, not because it enables us to part more readily with these products, but because it increases our means of acquiring articles of necessity, comfort, and luxury in exchange. It is not the export of so many millions' worth of cotton goods which benefits England; it is the acquisition of the sugar and coffee, the wines, tea, silk, and other numberless objects of value, which we receive in return. Our best customers are, not those who take most of our produce, but those who give us the greatest amount of value in exchange for it. Under an entirely free system, the benefit of colonies, that is, the enjoyment of the articles which they produce, would ultimately result, not to the mother country, but to that country which could supply the

colonies on the cheapest terms with goods in exchange for those articles. A country producing only articles not wanted by her colony, could not of course find a market there, or have any direct trade with it. Russia may colonize, as it is termed, large tracts of desert country by drafts from the superabundant population of her central provinces ; but the Russian producer can derive no direct advantage therefrom, because he can only send thither articles of raw produce, of which the colonists have probably enough and to spare. It is undoubtedly true, that even under a system of free competition, the mother country will long retain an advantage in the market of her colony from the durability of national tastes and habits.\* Thus it is said by travellers, that the wines of Spain and Portugal are even to this day in general use in South America, although naturally less suited for its ardent climate than the lighter growths of Northern Europe. And a greater and more permanent advantage will result to her from that identity of language and customs which attracts to each other the traders of kindred nations, and modifies even the instinct of gain. But such exceptions to the general rule are comparatively slight and transitory. It has, therefore, been the favourite object of European governments, ever since modern colonization began, to confine the inhabitants of their colonies as far as possible to the use of articles produced in the mother country by legislative enactment.

That such prohibitions, if unaccompanied by counter-vailing protection, are unjust and repugnant to ordinary notions of equity, needs no demonstration. What-

\* See some quaint observations on this subject in Mr. Haliburton's "Sam Slick" (series iii.); Alison on Population, ii. 387. The value of the annual exports from Holland to the Cape even now amounts to 100,000*l*.

ever treatment of a conquered country by a conqueror usage or popular feeling may sanction, the case of a mother country and colony is wholly distinct. The colonist who goes out with the sanction of the government at home retains all the rights to protection and equitable government which he could have possessed had he remained under its superintendence. And besides the solicitations of justice, states have generally, in no long time after the foundation of colonies, been withheld by motives of policy and fear from doing them wrong. They have feared to encourage their colonists to seek their independence, or to range themselves under the banner of hostile nations. Hence, as the producers of the mother country have never been willing to let go their own monopoly, it has been found necessary to make to the colonists a compensation at the expense of the consumers. The mother country has voluntarily bound herself to the use of colonial articles produced by her colonists only. This, then, will be found (not I think in theory only, but in historical truth also) to have been the ordinary course of the colonial system. First, the mother country has endeavoured to secure the monopoly of some precious commodities produced in the colony. Next, she has subjected the colonies to the necessity of consuming articles of her own production. Thirdly, she has granted the colonists the exclusive right of producing particular articles for her own consumption. And such has been the course of events, brought about far more by the exigencies of commerce than by any legislation, that I think we shall find that this last is the only substantial fragment of the old colonial system which now remains. It is my present object, leaving out of the question the economical effects of that system on the development of



colonies themselves, to consider it simply in relation to the mother country.

Five different classes of restrictions contribute to make up the entire commercial system, which most European nations have thought it advisable to adopt toward their colonies, and which England endeavoured to establish by her navigation acts : —

1. Restrictions on the exportation of produce from the colony, elsewhere than to the mother country.

2. Restrictions on the importation of goods into the colony from foreign countries.

3. Restrictions on the importation of colonial produce into the mother country from foreign countries or colonies.

4. Restrictions on the carriage of goods to and from the colonies in other shipping than that of the mother country.

5. Restrictions on the manufacture of their own raw produce by the colonists.

1. With regard to the first of these, I shall not think it necessary to discuss the question of their utility to the mother country on the present occasion ; because, as I have said, they are now nearly obsolete. The effects of the Spanish system of monopolizing the precious metals, or rather of the delusive attempt to do so, are no where so ably exposed as in the great work of Adam Smith. The Dutch persist to this day in a similar policy with respect to the spices of the eastern islands ; and the following estimates of the present condition of that famous trade by a recent writer, as compared with that of a branch of colonial commerce but of yesterday, the southern spermaceti whale fishery, may give us some idea of the success of the experiment : —

“ The spermaceti whale fishery employs 32,100 tons  
“ of shipping, and 3210 seamen ; the vaunted spice

“trade, 700 tons and 80 seamen : the tonnage is thus  
 “forty-six times greater ; the number of hands em-  
 “ployed forty times greater. The value of the fishery  
 “is 1,070,000*l.* ; that of the spices, at three times their  
 “natural price, 120,000*l.*, a little more than one-half  
 “of the value of the fishery. This amount from the  
 “fishery is obtained by the labour of 3210 men, among  
 “the boldest, most active, and most hardy, that human  
 “institutions are capable of breeding. The spices are  
 “obtained through the enslaving of a population of  
 “46,000 ; or with the labour of 11,500 persons, taking  
 “the labouring population at about one-fourth of the  
 “former number, with perhaps a million more, who are  
 “by means of it robbed of the most ordinary rights of  
 “human nature, and kept in slavery and barbarism to  
 “ensure an unworthy and contemptible object.” \*

2. The next and more important branch of the system consists in restrictions on the importation of goods into the colony from foreign countries. It is, as has been shown, a contrivance for enabling the producers of the mother country to buy cheap and sell dear ; to dispose of a portion of the produce of their capital and labour at a higher rate than they could have done, had they been subjected to the competition of foreign producers. In considering the principle of this contrivance, we must necessarily return to a certain extent over the ground which we traversed in our last lecture.

It was the opinion of Adam Smith, that this class of restrictions had the effect of raising the rate of profit in the mother country. Supposing a country to acquire, by conquest, a considerable extension of her dominion, whether colonial or foreign ; and supposing her to re-

\* Torrens' Colonization of South Australia, p. 190. (from Crawford's Indian Archipelago). Some recent changes have taken place in the mode of conducting the spice trade, of which I do not know the details.

strict the consumers of that province or colony to the use of her own manufactures ; foreign capitals employed before in supplying it with goods, would necessarily be withdrawn from the trade : the capital of the conquering country would supply its place. Competition being thus diminished, the remaining capitalists would be enabled to make large profits ; to buy cheap and to sell dear.\* “ But in such an employment,” says he, “ the profit must have been very great, and much “ above the ordinary level of profit in other branches of “ trade. This superiority of profit in the colony trade “ could not fail to draw from other branches of trade “ a part of the capital which had before been employed “ in them. But this revulsion of capital, as it must “ have gradually increased the competition of capitals “ in the colony trade, so it must have gradually diminished that competition in all other branches of “ trade ; as it must have gradually lowered the profits “ of the one, so it must have gradually raised those of “ the other, till the profits of all came to a new level, “ different from, and somewhat higher than, that at “ which they had been before.” And he imagined that this result had actually been produced to a certain extent by our navigation acts. Reasoning, therefore, upon his own peculiar theory, that high profits were injurious to a country, he employed this as one of his arguments against the colonial monopoly.

This however, it is well known, is a view in which he is singular ; and as, according to received doctrines, a comparatively high rate of profits, so far from being disadvantageous is “ one of the very best tests of increasing “ prosperity,” it is clear, that if the restricted colonial trade really did produce the effect here ascribed to it, it would be a blessing to the mother country, whatever

\* Book iv. chap. 7.

it might be to the colony. But Ricardo and his followers contend, that the whole argument is without foundation. According to them, as I yesterday showed you, the rate of profit in every country depends not upon the extent of the field for the employment of capital, but upon the productiveness of capital and labour. No extension of the foreign trade would increase the productiveness of capital and labour ; consequently, it would not raise the rate of profit. There would undoubtedly, as Adam Smith asserts, be high profits made at first by those who were in a position to avail themselves of it. But the competition between the capitalists of the mother country would speedily bring them down again to the average rate of profit. The result, therefore, of this forced extension of the foreign or colonial trade would merely be this—the goods of the favoured country would command in the market of the other a greater quantity of the goods of that other, than before the restriction was imposed. If England can force France to take her goods in exchange for wine, a smaller quantity of English goods will buy the same quantity of wine as before ; the price of wine as estimated in English commodities will fall ; the English consumer will have a greater mass of commodities to enjoy ; English wealth will be increased ; but the rate of profit in England will remain unaffected. The only exception to this law would be the case of an exclusive company. If any foreign trade were to be suddenly extended, and were to be committed to the hands of monopolists, who have the power of excluding home competition, they of course would continue to make high profits ; profits limited, in theory, only by the intensity of demand in that foreign country for the articles which they might furnish.

It would be impossible for me, in such an incidental

discussion as the present, to enter into that course of reasoning, so close and logical as to be almost incapable of abridgment, by which M. Ricardo supports these celebrated positions. I must refer you to his work, especially the sixth chapter, and to Mr. M'Culloch's notes to A. Smith on the Rate of Profit and Colonial Trade, to the review of Ricardo's work in the Edinburgh, and to the article "Colony" in the supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica, as forming, perhaps, the most useful commentaries on it. On the other hand, as I also mentioned in my former lecture, Mr. Malthus's view of the causes which influence the rate of profit more nearly coincides with that of Adam Smith, and he considers the comparative abundance or scantiness of capital to be one of the most prominent among those causes.\*

In one case, at all events, it is evident, that a rise in the price of manufactured articles in a foreign market, together with a great extension of that market, would raise the rate of profit in the manufacturing country. It would, of course, immediately attract a large additional amount of capital. Supposing the supply of labour to be such that wages did not rise, it is plain that the capital so employed would continue to realize high profits, until the competition of capital flowing in from all quarters reduced them to the original level. But that capital would flow in from other employments. Suppose it to flow in from agriculture. A portion of the fields of the country would be abandoned. But the price of food would not greatly rise; for food would be purchased (I am supposing a state of commercial freedom) with a part of the foreign produce imported in return for the manufactured goods. But in such a state of things

\* Political Economy, book i. chap. v. sect. 3.

it would immediately become profitable to the landlords to retain capital on their soil by a remission of part of the rent. This could only take place on soils yielding a rent : the worst soils yielding little or none must be abandoned. We have only then to suppose that the extension of the foreign market is so sudden, and so great, that this necessary process, the abandonment of the worst soils, takes place before the vacuum in the foreign trade is filled up by competition. Then the balance will be adjusted in this way ; an additional quantity of food will, no doubt, be imported from abroad : but a permanent, because natural, rise of profits will take place, the productiveness of industry being increased.

It seems impossible therefore to argue, that, supposing a country could secure the monopoly of the supply of a great foreign market, the effect would not be a real increase of wealth, whether by the rise of profits, or, in the language of Ricardo, by an increase of the mass of commodities. But it is obvious that such a supposition as I have here made, is quite inapplicable in its very nature to the colony trade. The growth of colonies, though comparatively rapid, is far less so, under ordinary circumstances, than that of the capital and labour applicable to manufactures in the country which is to supply them. Competition among the native manufacturers would therefore as surely bring down the price of their goods to the lowest rate at which they could afford to supply them, in the colonial market, as in the home market. Any such unnatural enhancement of profits, either in rate or in amount, as that of which I have spoken, might indeed take place if some vast and flourishing continent, some new Atlantis, were created for our benefit, and brought within

reach of our ships and our orders in council ; but assuredly not in the usual progress of sublunary affairs.

Let us look at the subject, then, in a more practical light. Supposing England to have the artificial monopoly of supplying Canada with silk, which France could supply cheaper. A certain quantity of English capital is then invested in the silk manufacture, which otherwise would not be so invested ; inasmuch as, without the monopoly, it could not be so employed at the ordinary rate of profit. Canada, of course, loses by this arrangement all the difference between the price of English and French silks ; but we are not at present considering the interests of Canada. Suppose the trade thrown open to France ; Canada would gain all that difference ; England would have the whole of the capital, now, by the supposition, invested in the silk trade, thrown out of employment. Now, it is undoubtedly a conceivable case, that there could be no other employment found for that capital—that it must perish ; and it is the common fallacy which misleads the multitude of those who argue against free trade, to suppose that this conceivable case is the probable one. It is in fact scarcely possible, and for this reason : few countries, if any, certainly no great and colonizing countries, are without some advantages for the employment of their capital in particular branches of industry. If England, in hardware, in cottons, in woollens, has the natural monopoly of the supply of the world, it does not practically admit of a doubt, that should the artificial monopoly which we have supposed her to possess of the supply of Canada with silk be broken up, the capital thus engaged would speedily seek and find employment in those, her rightful and prerogative branches of production. We should buy Canadian timber and corn, as we bought them before ; but we should buy them by

exporting more woollen and cotton goods, more hardware, and less or no silk.

On this supposition, then, Canada would gain something by the removal of the monopoly; England would lose nothing. In point of fact, England would gain also. I have spoken of the artificial silk trade, as realizing, in common with other trades, the ordinary profits of stock; but in truth a forced trade seldom does so for any length of time; it is essentially subject to fluctuation, uncertainty, and disappointment, beyond all others. One reason of this, among many, is very obvious. When the price of any article not absolutely necessary is enhanced by monopoly, the consumer submits for a while, because his acquired habits induce him to reduce his consumption of the article as little as possible. But in the course of time he either discovers substitutes for the high priced articles, or, if that is impossible, he accommodates his taste to his circumstances, and learns to do without it, and the trade falls to the ground.

Again, when the price of an article in the consuming country is raised by monopoly very far above the cost of production, it follows that a comparatively slight fall of that price may occasion a total loss of profit to the producer. "The price of timber in Canada is trifling; but in England, being augmented by high charges, it is five times the original cost; so that a fluctuation of 20 per cent. in the price in this country amounts either to a total loss, or a profit of 100 per cent. Hence, a trifling decline in our market is completely ruinous to the colonial shipper."\* According to another calculation, 5 per cent. fluctuation in England causes 30 per cent. in Canada.†

"In providing a forced market in the colonies for

\* Murray's British America, vol. ii. p. 33.

† Debate in the House of Commons, July 1839.



“ articles that we should not otherwise be able to dispose of, we really engage a portion of the capital and labour of the country in a less advantageous direction than that into which it would naturally have flowed. We impress upon it an artificial direction; and withdraw it from those secure and really beneficial businesses in which it would have been employed, to engage it in businesses, the existence of which depends only on the continuance of oppressive regulations, and in which we are surpassed by foreigners.”\*

It will readily occur to those of my hearers, who are in any degree familiar with the subject now brought before their notice, that the arguments here adduced are precisely as applicable to the great question of free trade in regard to home or foreign as to colonial commerce. Let us suppose that the manufacturers of Spitalfields have the exclusive monopoly of supplying England with silk. The consumer loses all the difference between the price which the Spitalfields manufacturer charges him, and that which the French manufacturer would charge him. Let the monopoly be removed, and that whole difference is immediately saved to the consumer. But the capital of the Spitalfields manufacturer is lost. Not so: for some parts of it there is immediate and permanent employment, owing to the demand of the consumer, part of whose revenue is thus saved to him for new articles of consumption. The remainder, we need not doubt, will by degrees be absorbed into the healthy system of the country. There will, indeed, be some exception for the fixed capital employed in the business, which must partly perish; nor is it denied, that a forced trade cannot be destroyed without more or less temporary, and some little permanent, loss: but this, although it may sometimes afford a

\* M<sup>r</sup>. Culloch, Dict. of Commerce, art. “Colony.”

reason against the hasty abolition of an established monopoly, raises a far stronger argument against the establishment of any new one. Let us now, if we cannot learn to regard the world as one country in regard to commercial intercourse, at least look on the British empire as a single body: let us view Canada in the light of Yorkshire or Wales; and the real effect of such restrictions will at once be apparent.

But were the case otherwise, governments, however powerful, are utterly unable to impose such restrictions, as shall secure to their subjects the real monopoly of this or that species of manufacture. "Even were it "conceded," says Mr. M'Culloch, "that the possession "of an outlet in the colonies for goods, that could not "otherwise be disposed of, was an advantage, it is one "that can exist in theory only. Practically, it can "never be realized. The interests of the colonists, and "the dexterity and devices of the smuggler, are too "much for custom-house regulations. Cheap goods "never fail of making their way through every obstacle. "All the tyrannical laws and *guarda costas* of Old "Spain, did not hinder her colonies from being glutted "with prohibited commodities. And we may be assured, "that the moment a competitor appears in the field, "capable of supplying the Canadians and people of "Jamaica with cottons, woollens, hardware, &c. cheaper "than we can supply them, that moment will they "cease to be our customers. All the revenue officers, "and all the ships of England, supposing them to be "employed for the purpose, would be unable to avert "this result." In point of fact, all the regulations which legislative ingenuity can suggest, for the purpose of excluding manufactured articles from a country, only end in adding a small per centage to the price of them, which goes in the nature of a premium or insurance to

the smuggler. It was stated the other day in the newspapers, that while the Belgian revenue tables estimated the importation of silks from France, for some short period, at two million francs, the French tables, for a corresponding period, shew an exportation of silk to Belgium of the value of from eight to twelve millions. And it is in defiance of proofs like these, that governments continue to maintain their system of prohibition, and that economists and politicians continue to applaud them !

But these considerations are not at the present day of much practical importance to ourselves. Our unrivalled superiority in manufactures gives us the command of the supply of our colonies, without the necessity of having recourse to artificial restrictions to maintain it. Importation into them is, accordingly, very little affected by prohibitive laws, with the exception of those which restrain the commerce of foreign countries with some of our dependencies in grain, fish, and other articles of raw produce. These are relics of our old navigation laws, not intended to benefit the mother country, but in point of fact to favour the industry of our North American settlements at the expense of those of the West Indies, which were supposed to be sufficiently encouraged by their exclusive supply of the home market. Their effect on the depressed trade of these colonies has been of late years extremely injurious, and measures for their alleviation are now actively in progress. But I fear the supposition that they, in any degree, counterbalance the effect of the protective duties on West India produce ; that, in the words of the recent Committee on Imports, “ the difficulties of modifying the discriminating duties which “ favour the introduction of British colonial articles “ would be very much abated, if the colonies themselves

"were allowed the benefits of free trade with all the world," is far too sanguine, and likely to lead to disappointment.

3. Such, therefore, has been the singular course which the fortunes of commerce have taken, and such the passion of our governments to favour and enrich distant colonies, that while we have lost altogether even those apparent advantages, which, according to the old mercantile theory, the monopoly of their supply with manufactures would have secured us, we still continue bound to take certain articles of raw produce exclusively from them. The purpose alleged for these mutual restrictions in the preamble to one of our old navigation acts, namely, "the maintaining a greater correspondence and kindness between the subjects at home and those in the plantations," is now pursued by means of sacrifices on our part, made absolutely without any consideration from theirs. For, unless we admit the argument sometimes used in this discussion, that it is right to grant commercial privileges to our colonists, in order that they may the more rapidly become wealthy customers (which is nearly the same thing as asserting, that a tradesman will gain by giving a shilling to be laid out in his shop), it must be confessed that the colony trade, as now conducted, rests on prohibitions of which the burden falls almost exclusively on the mother country alone. Nor in this instance, as in that of manufactured goods, does the contraband trade render that burden little more than nominal. Raw produce, from its greater bulk, can in general be effectually protected by prohibitions.

Besides the direct loss to the national income, occasioned by prohibitive duties on the importation of raw produce, enhancing its price above that which it bears in the free market of the world, two other effects are

worthy of observation: the one is, the diminution of consumption which they occasion; the other is, the forcing into use inferior articles, and exclusion of better. All these are exemplified in the colonial trade at the present day.

West India sugars are at present subjected in England to a duty of 24*s.* per cwt.; East India to a duty of 32*s.*; foreign sugars, of 63*s.* The price of West India sugar exclusive of the duty has averaged, in a series of years, about 30*s.* per cwt.; inclusive of the duty, 54*s.*, not equalling altogether the duty on foreign sugar; so that the latter is what is termed prohibitive, amounting, that is, to an entire prohibition of its use. It is probable that sugar might be supplied from Cuba, Brazil, and other countries, at less than 20*s.* per hogshead; supposing therefore the prohibitive duties to be repealed, and the 24*s.* duty to be retained, the price in England would fall to 44*s.* But with such an extension of consumption as this fall would produce, it would be practicable to lower the duty considerably, and thus produce again a farther increase of consumption to an almost incalculable amount. The duty on coffee was lowered in 1825 one-half; and by 1832 the consumption had risen from 8,000,000 lbs. to 32,000,000 lbs.\* It is scarcely possible to estimate the effect of a similar abatement on an article so extensively useful and agreeable as sugar. “Those who have not seen with their own eyes,” says Humboldt, “what an immense quantity of sugar is consumed in Spanish America, even

\* The following details on the subject of the consumption of coffee were presented by Mr. Porter to the Committee on Import Duties, 1840: —

Year.	Duty per lb.	Consumption, per head.	Duty paid, per head.
1801.	1 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i>	1·09 oz.	1½ <i>d.</i>
1821.	1 0	8·01	6
1831.	0 6	21·13	8

"in the poorest families, must be astonished at finding "that France requires for her supply, not more than "three or four times as much as the island of Cuba," which, when Humboldt visited it, had a population of only 340,000. It is a misfortune, that the necessity under which we are placed, of maintaining an enormously expensive machine of government, should thus narrowly limit and curtail the enjoyment by the great bulk of our people of the free bounties of nature. But for that sacrifice we receive an abundant reward in the preservation of those institutions, to which we owe the far greater blessings of security, order, and liberty. What return we obtain for that farther sacrifice, which is made exclusively for the sake of enriching the West Indians, it is not so easy to determine. As matters stand now, however, it is plain, that about two-fifths of the price of every pound of sugar which we consume are the natural cost of the article, two-fifths are paid to government, and one-fifth as a tribute to the planters of Jamaica and Demerara.

These considerations are suggested by the state of the colonial sugar trade, such as it has been for a long average of years. But the time for reflection is almost past: it is now menaced with a serious revolution. From causes not under our review in the present lecture, the cost of production in our colonies has increased within the last six years to a perilous amount; or, to speak more accurately, production has been so cramped by the deficiency of labour, that it is utterly inadequate to meet the demand. The price of brown sugar has risen from 39*s.* 6*d.* in 1839 to 57*s.* 6*d.* in 1840. The total quantity of sugar supplied by the British West Indies has fallen from an average of 3,860,484 cwt. in 1830-34 to 3,354,833 cwt. in 1835-39. In November of this last year the stock of

sugar in hand was less by one-half than in the corresponding month of 1839 ; nor is there any reasonable expectation that the productiveness of our colonies will be speedily increased. The monopoly, therefore, approaches its termination, for this country will not long endure the increasing price and diminishing quantity of an article so essential to the habits of the present day. Even those who see many and serious reasons for regretting a change, which may have so unfavourable an effect on the prospects of the African race, cannot but foresee its approach ; while those who contemplate it with a view only to the economical progress of the country, regard it with unmixed satisfaction.\*

The colonial and foreign timber trade affords a remarkable instance of the other result of prohibitions on the importation of raw produce already alluded to ; namely, the forced consumption of inferior in lieu of better commodities. The discriminating duties on timber are owing to commercial regulations of very modern origin, having been first adopted in 1808, in a time of war between ourselves and the Baltic nations, and not very materially altered since. The duty on timber from our North American colonies is now 10*s.* a load, on Baltic timber 4*5s.* It was stated, when a slight reduction of the duty on European timber, accompanied by the imposition of that on the colonial, took place in 1821, that the protection then continued was merely sufficient to counterbalance the difference of cost, chiefly in freight, between the two commodities, and enable the producers to meet on equal terms in the English market. But, as Mr. M'Culloch observes, the

\* It may be worth while to compare the statistics of the colonial sugar trade with those of the colonial wool trade, in which the discriminating duty is so light as to afford very small protection.— See APPENDIX.

fact that vessels have been known to load timber in the Baltic, and carry it round by North America, in order to import it as the produce of the latter country, seems conclusively to show, that this is not the case. Still, Baltic timber is supplied to a considerable extent. It was stated the other day in Parliament, that of the annual supply of timber requisite to meet our consumption, three-fifths were furnished by North America, one-fifth still by the Baltic. This may be partly owing, no doubt, to the lower cost of production of the latter article, which enables the seller of it to compete in some instances with his rival, notwithstanding the duty with which he is loaded; but it is owing in a much greater degree to its superior excellence. To this fact testimony is borne by almost every witness of practical experience, who has been examined before the committees which have reported on this question. Sir Robert Seppings stated, in 1831, that frigates built of Canadian timber possessed, on the average, only one-half the durability of those built of Baltic, and that the use of the former had been in consequence discontinued in the navy. It is peculiarly liable to the dry rot; and there is little doubt that the great increase of that plague, both in our dockyards and in our buildings, which has lately been complained of, is mainly owing to the preference given, since 1808, to the colonial commodity. We are therefore restricted from the use of an article at once cheaper and better, and compelled to employ one dearer and worse. Nor is the pecuniary loss to the community to be estimated only by the difference in natural cost between Canadian and Baltic timber. We must add, also, the damage produced by the inferior durability of the former. If Sir Robert Seppings's testimony were correct, Baltic timber would be actually as cheap as American, if it cost twice as



much, instead of selling, as it would do were it not for the duty, for two-thirds or three-fourths of the price of the latter. Nor can we with justice set off against this loss, as is sometimes attempted to be done, the consequent increase of our trade with Canada. For every customer whom we gain there, we lose one in Russia or in Sweden. We buy Canadian timber with our manufactures ; and were we to return to the use of Baltic, it is only with our manufactures that we could buy it.

Another argument, indeed, for maintaining these protective duties, especially those on timber, arises from the increased employment which the trade, thus regulated, is supposed to give to our shipping, both absolutely and relatively, as compared with foreign countries. But the encouragement of the shipping of the mother country being, as it were, a separate head of the colonial system of commerce, will deserve separate consideration ; as well as the remaining head which I indicated at the commencement of my lecture, the restriction, namely, laid on the manufacture by colonists of their raw produce. Having briefly touched on these two subjects, I shall conclude to-morrow's lecture by a few general remarks on some economical advantages derived, or supposed to be derived, by the mother country through her relations with her colonies—the *per contra*, as it were, of the great account which I am now laying one side before you.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE VII.

IMPORT of Colonial Wool into Great Britain and Ireland;  
in lbs.

Years.	New South Wales.	Van Diemen's Land.	Cape of Good Hope.
1830	1,967,309	- -	33,407
1834	4,069,750	- -	141,707
1836	5,240,090	- -	331,972
1839	5,414,359	3,187,180	689,495
1840	6,240,593	2,401,728	742,604

## LECT. VIII.

## THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

THE next branch of the colonial system to which I have to direct your attention consists in *restrictions on the carriage of merchandize to and from the colonies in other shipping than that of the mother country.*

The attempt to confine commerce with foreign parts to English vessels has been a favourite point of policy with our statesmen from very early times. The object, however, of the more ancient enactments and regulations on this subject seems to have been almost wholly the defence of the kingdom. Dependent for safety, in our insular situation, chiefly on our command of the seas, it has been in all times a matter of the deepest national interest with us, to provide for the maintenance of that superiority. Hence the encouragement offered to the multiplication of shipping and seamen, by bounties on particular branches of maritime employment, and by heavy duties on the importation of goods in foreign bottoms. I may refer you for notices respecting the English navigation laws previous to the 17th century, besides Anderson's History of Commerce and other well known authorities on the subject, to that very entertaining compilation, Dr. Southey's Maritime History of England. You will there see how these various prohibitions, always enforced when war was apprehended, were sure to be again relaxed or evaded in time of peace, when the private interests of merchants prevailed over the care of the public security. How far our naval greatness has really been promoted by our commercial legislation, it is no part of my province to

inquire. Undoubtedly no political philosopher will dispute the proposition, that it may be advantageous to a state to sacrifice a portion of her wealth — to lay her merchants under certain disadvantages — with a view to provide for those paramount objects of policy, the means of defending herself against foreign aggression, and maintaining her rank among other powers. Nor was it, apparently, until the 17th century, that these legitimate intentions began to be mixed up with others of a more objectionable kind, arising from the erroneous notion, that the national wealth could be increased by regulations compelling a portion of it to flow into definite channels.

The extraordinary commercial success of the Dutch served at that time as the principal stimulus to the jealousy of our statesmen. The Dutch had monopolised a great part of the carrying trade of Europe, and almost the whole of that which was carried by the American settlements of all nations with Europe and with each other. In the reign of Charles II., Sir William Petty roughly estimated the whole mercantile shipping of Europe at 2,000,000 tons, of which 800,000 belonged to the United Provinces. Nor was this monopoly the result of superior natural advantages. Inhabiting a country rich neither in timber nor metals, and with every branch of industry heavily taxed, they could neither build nor man their vessels so cheaply as many others. But they possessed a great accumulation of capital, which enabled their shipowners to be content with a lower rate of freight than was necessary to satisfy the smaller capitalists of other countries; and the still greater advantage of a moral capital, if it may be so termed, of energy, industry, habits of business, and liberal institutions, which, in the long run, proved far more precious than the richest gifts of

Nature, in hands unskilled or negligent in the use of them. Most of this, it will be observed, was the consequence of their commercial supremacy, which enabled them to accumulate that capital and to contract those habits. The carrying trade, as Adam Smith truly observes, “is the natural effect and symptom of national wealth; but it does not seem to be the natural cause of it.” The English of that day, however, thought otherwise: they resolved to deprive the Dutch, as far as in them lay, by legislative measures, of the exclusive source of riches which they conceived them to have appropriated. Hence the famous navigation laws of Cromwell and Charles II., to which I have so frequently had occasion to advert, and of which I need not now recapitulate the provisions. As far as regards the colonies, they were intended to compel the colonies to use English shipping for the exportation of their merchandise to Europe and to each other, and to secure to the English shipowners the monopoly of supplying the colonies both with English and foreign commodities.

The enactment of the navigation laws was contemporaneous with the rise of our supremacy, both commercial and maritime, and the decay of that of Holland. And for more than one hundred years, they were universally regarded by ourselves as among the chief causes and most important bulwarks of our prosperity. Adam Smith himself (speaking, however, of the measure in a political and not economical point of view), says that “National animosity, at that time, aimed at the very same object which the most deliberate wisdom would have recommended—the diminution of the naval power of Holland, the only naval power which could endanger the security of England.”\* Nevertheless,

\* Wealth of Nations, book iv. chap. 2.

as far as the accumulation of wealth is concerned, it is absolutely impossible but that they must have been, in the first instance, injurious. If Dutch shipping was at that period cheaper than English, the merchant who was forced to embark his commodities in English bottoms lost the whole of that difference. The English ship-owner did not gain the whole of it ; a portion was sunk, at a dead loss both to the nation and to the capitalist, as has already been explained. If we were to exclude French wines, for the purpose of growing dearer wines at home, in despite of the difference of soil and climate, either a larger portion of our revenue must be devoted to the production of wine than is now devoted to its purchase, or our consumption of an useful and agreeable article must be diminished. And, in the same manner, any restriction on the use of foreign shipping for exporting our commodities must either divert a portion of capital to be unprofitably employed in the production of ships, or must cause a diminution in our exports. If the navigation laws, therefore, did really contribute to increase the wealth of England, it must have been by some mysterious and indirect mode of operation, inexplicable on ordinary principles of economical reasoning, such as the defenders of commercial restrictions are continually suggesting, but rarely or never attempt to define.

But it is to be observed, that many of these effects which have been ascribed to the navigation laws must, in point of fact, have followed from other causes, if those laws had never been enacted. The Dutch, it has been said, possessed no natural advantages for the monopoly of the carrying trade, or, indeed, of any other branch of commerce. And great as are the conquests which human skill and energy can achieve, no dominion

is durable in the foundation of which nature has not co-operated. Holland had also political difficulties to contend against. In the middle of the seventeenth century, while England and other countries were pressing into the lists as rivals, she was toiling under a load of taxation such as no other community has ever endured. On the whole, it seems reasonable to conclude with Mr. M'Culloch, that "The decline of her maritime preponderance was owing rather to the gradual increase of commerce and navigation in other countries, and to the disasters and burdens occasioned by the ruinous contests the republic had to sustain with Cromwell, Charles II., and Louis XIV., than to the exclusion of their merchant vessels from the ports of England." And if the amount of their loss by our legislation be problematical, that of our own gain by it is certainly much more so.

In 1825 the truth of the principle was tested by the extensive alterations which then took place in our navigation laws—alterations, indeed, which have affected the foreign more than the colonial trade and shipping of the empire. But the policy of what is termed the "reciprocity system" has been matter of so much debate, that it may be advisable to pause a little in our review, in order to examine what light the experience of late years has really thrown upon it. Let us employ for this purpose the statement of the case by Mr. Alison, in his recent work on Population (chap. 15.),—a professed enemy to the legislation of Mr. Huskisson and his successors.

The tables to which he refers show that between 1801 and 1822 British tonnage increased from 922,594 to 1,664,186,—in other words, nearly doubled; while foreign tonnage diminished from 780,155 to 469,151.

Foreign to British was, therefore, at the first period, nearly as eight to nine; at the latter, less than one to three.

From 1823 to 1836, under the reciprocity system, British tonnage increased from 1,740,859 to 2,505,473, or about one-third; foreign tonnage from 582,996 to 988,899, or about two-fifths. In the first of these years, it was to the British as one to three; nearly, in the last, as two to five.

From this table Mr. Alison infers that the proportion of foreign to British tonnage has increased since the reciprocity system was adopted, and that the system was unfavourable to our shipping. It is important, however, before we proceed in our calculations, to observe how fortunate Mr. Alison has been in his selection of the particular year, 1801, as the basis of his calculations. It was a year of war, in which the amount of British tonnage was small, and that of neutral unusually large. If he had taken the following year, 1802, as the groundwork of his comparison, it would have appeared that, in his first period, the British tonnage had only increased about a fifth, while the foreign had remained absolutely stationary. We need not accuse Mr. Alison of unfair intention in adopting so fallacious a test; but it is obvious that any argument by comparison of single years is very unsatisfactory.

But Mr. Alison proceeds to analyse the returns more minutely, with a view to prove, first, the diminution of the British shipping in the trade with countries on terms of reciprocity with us,—secondly, the diminution or slight increase in our export trade with those countries; by which it was thought, when the system was adopted, we should be remunerated for any loss to our shipping interest. He shows that the tonnage of



British vessels, which cleared outwards to the countries included in the reciprocity treaties (Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Russia, France, the United States), had increased, between 1822 and 1838, from 469,726 tons to 714,881 only.

Foreign, from 383,924 to 990,328.

Exports, from £18,084,013 to £21,270,705.

To non-reciprocity countries, British tonnage had increased from 407,847 tons to 783,359.

Foreign, from 82,432 to 217,515.

Exports, from £8,355,854 to £15,101,765.

To the Colonies :

British, from 786,613 tons to 1,287,157.

Foreign, from 795 to 2,823.

Exports, from £10,526,156 to £13,689,367.

He also shows that the increase under the first of these heads, in British tonnage, is entirely referable to our trade with the United States. Our tonnage in trade with the nations of Northern Europe has slightly declined.

“ Thus,” he says, “ it distinctly appears, both from  
 “ the Parliamentary Returns and the admission of the  
 “ most able and well-informed advocates for the reci-  
 “ procity system, that the anticipated and promised ex-  
 “ tension of our foreign trade, from the adoption of  
 “ that system, has not taken place : that, so far from it,  
 “ our trade has rapidly and signally declined, during  
 “ the last 25 years, with the old states of Europe, fifteen  
 “ of which have been spent under the reciprocity  
 “ system ; and, therefore, that we have gratuitously in-  
 “ flicted a severe wound upon our own maritime in-  
 “ terests, without having purchased thereby any equi-  
 “ valent advantage, either for our foreign trade or our  
 “ manufactures.”

“ It is perfectly clear, therefore, that the reciprocity

“ system has had no tendency to check the serious  
 “ decay which is going forward in our *European* trade ;  
 “ while the restrictive system, *which is still applied,*  
 “ *with undiminished force, to our colonies,* at least in  
 “ their intercourse with their parent state, has had as  
 “ little effect in checking the rapid and astonishing  
 “ growth, both of our shipping and foreign trade, in  
 “ the three distant parts of the empire.”

The alleged failure of the experiment, he contends, proceeds mainly from this cause : that the reciprocity was not real but nominal. “ If the article can be  
 “ reared cheaper abroad than at home, it is a perfect  
 “ delusion to say that we have entered into a fair re-  
 “ ciprocity treaty, because we admit that article on the  
 “ same terms with them : real reciprocity consists, not  
 “ in admitting the same article into our ports on the  
 “ same terms on which our neighbours receive ours,  
 “ but in obtaining admittance for a corresponding article  
 “ on our side in which we have a corresponding advan-  
 “ tage over them. Unless this is done, reciprocity is  
 “ entirely illusory, because it is all on one side. . . .  
 “ Every one knows that the Baltic powers can carry on  
 “ ship-building far cheaper than England, for this plain  
 “ reason, that the materials of ships, timber, cordage,  
 “ hemp, and tar, are produced by nature on the shores  
 “ of the Baltic, in countries where labour is not half so  
 “ dear as in the British Isles. On the other hand,  
 “ cotton goods and iron of all sorts can be manufac-  
 “ tured far cheaper in Great Britain than either in  
 “ France or the Baltic states, in consequence of the  
 “ accumulation of capital and great skill in machinery  
 “ in this country, and the incalculable advantage of our  
 “ coal mines. Real reciprocity, then, would have con-  
 “ sisted in a treaty, whereby, in consideration of our  
 “ admitting their shipping into our harbours on as

“favourable terms as they admitted ours into theirs,  
“they consented to receive our cotton goods into their  
“ports on the same terms as we received their cotton  
“fabrics into ours.”

Whether this would have been “real reciprocity” or not, it would certainly have been a very gainful treaty for us. But it was scarcely likely that we should persuade the Prussian government, acting on the ordinary principles of commercial policy by which governments conduct themselves, to such an exchange of golden for brass armour as the free admission of the staple produce of our industry, cotton goods, in return for so slight a boon as the free admission of their shipping. But the Baltic states have two great staples of their own, timber and corn. We restrict the admission of both by differential duties of a very onerous character. Now, when the reciprocity system commenced, the fatal effects of those restrictions on our Baltic trade had only been felt for a few years. Ever since that time they have been sedulously maintained, and as sedulously met by counter-restrictions on the import of our manufactures by the Baltic powers. With or without reciprocity, therefore, our trade with them must equally have declined. If we had not admitted their shipping, which, in point of fact, we were unable to prevent, except by a total cessation from all commercial intercourse, it must inevitably have declined in a greater proportion. After making some allowances which must be made in the comparison, such as the difference of measurement in English and Baltic vessels, which makes our tonnage appear relatively smaller than it is, there is no doubt that, from superior cheapness, the vessels of the Baltic ship-owners are able to compete pretty equally with ours, for those short voyages by which this trade is carried on. Narrowed as our market

is, by legislation, for their most valuable productions, it is probable that this circumstance is the principal cause which keeps alive the remnant of this once important branch of our commerce.\*

With the United States, the other great reciprocity country, although the trade is still chiefly carried on in American vessels, the proportion of our tonnage to theirs has increased since the system began ; and this is, undoubtedly, the fairest test of the effects of that system.

As the law now stands, goods can only be imported into our colonies in the shipping of the country which produces them ; and then only if the country in question be on terms of reciprocity with us. I will not discuss the apprehended danger to our maritime supremacy, if, by relaxing these restrictions, we were to lose the carrying trade. But whether we should, in fact, lose any important part of it is extremely questionable. If the received accounts of the strength and durability of the Baltic shipping are correct, it would certainly not be able to compete with our own in Transatlantic navigation. The shipping of the United States, our most formidable competitor, might interfere, to a certain ex-

\* The increase of foreign shipping of late years is also owing, in great measure, to the heavy duties on foreign timber, imposed to favour the inferior North American article. — See *Report of Committee on Imports*, 304, &c.

Statement showing the proportion which British shipping bore to the aggregate of shipping that passed the Sound, considering that aggregate as unity, in each year from 1831 to 1839.

Years.	Proportion of British to Total Shipping.	Years.	Proportion of British to Total Shipping.
1831	0·442	1836	0·322
1832	0·324	1837	0·322
1833	0·351	1838	0·348
1834	0·314	1839	0·342
1835	0·295		

(From the *Official Tables of Revenue, Trade, &c.*, for 1839.)

tent, in this branch of commerce: but, considering that our tonnage is at present gaining upon theirs, even in the direct trade between our ports and their own, it would hardly suffer much by their rivalry in what would be to them the more circuitous traffic between Great Britain and her colonies.

A more important remnant of the old navigation laws, as regards the colony trade, consists in restrictions on the direct importation of provisions and other articles from the United States into the West Indies. The duties on Baltic timber may also be regarded as maintained, in part, with a view to the advantage of the British ship-owner; inasmuch as the Canadian timber trade is carried on entirely in British or colonial bottoms, while in that of the Baltic Prussian and Norwegian vessels have a share. The number of vessels now employed exclusively in the American timber trade is estimated, by an impartial writer\*, at 684, and the men at 8,700. How large a proportion of these would be thrown out of employment by the equalization of the duties, it is not very easy to conjecture; but the necessity we are under of maintaining our maritime strength, renders it incumbent on us to proceed with caution towards such a measure, however confident we may be that the path will ultimately turn out right.

The injury which restrictions on the carrying trade effects to national wealth, by forcing the merchant to employ home shipping in preference to foreign, has been already explained; and nothing so plainly illustrates its nature and extent, as the singular evasions, or circuitous modes of proceeding, which they usually introduce into commerce when war interposes difficulties

\* Murray's *British America*, vol. ii. p. 24.

in the way of national intercourse: the great price to which commodities often rise will render it profitable to effect their transport by means of the most extraordinary routes. In the late war, American merchandise not unfrequently reached Paris by way of Salonica in Turkey.\* On one occasion, says Mr. Tooke†, in his work on Prices, two parcels of silk were despatched from Bergamo, in Lombardy, to this country; one went *viâ* Smyrna, the other *viâ* Archangel; the first was one year arriving, the latter two. Now all restrictions, especially those on the carrying trade, place neighbouring nations, as it were, in a perpetual state of commercial hostility; and cause, precisely in the same manner, a profitless expenditure of national property in circuitous modes of transit. Under our present system, it is said to be a common thing for United States' flour, intended for the West Indies, instead of being shipped direct from New York, &c., to be carried, in the first instance, to Montreal and Quebec, and thence shipped in British bottoms; thus raising the price of this necessary of life, and putting "a few hundred pounds into the pocket of the ship-owners, at the expense of many thousand pounds to the colonists."‡ "There have been instances of wheat being carried from Archangel to Quebec, landed there, and again shipped for Jamaica." Ships have been known to load

\* Say, Cours. iii. 361.

† Vol. i. 310.

‡ McCulloch's Dictionary of Commerce, p. 333. The same effect of circuitry of transit, and consequent increase of price, is, of course, liable to be produced by differential duties of every description. Coffees imported from the Cape of Good Hope pay ninepence duty. Now, as the cost of sending, in an indirect and unusual way, coffees from foreign countries to the Cape, is only from a half-penny to one penny per pound, very large quantities are shipped from the Brazils and Hayti to the Cape, and thence re-shipped to England. The English consumer thus pays the increased duty, and the difference of freight. — *Report of Committee on Imports*, 1840.

with timber in the north of Europe, carry that timber to Canada, and then bring it to England as Canada timber ; “ the difference of duty having been sufficient “ to indemnify the enormous expense of this round- “ about voyage.” These last are, doubtless, extreme cases, nor is it likely that they often occur ; but their mere possibility proves the enormous addition which is made to the natural price of an article by monopoly, especially that of the carrying trade, and the very unprofitable manner in which that difference may be wasted.

5. The last branch of the prohibitive system may be treated of in very few words : namely, the prohibitions laid on colonists to manufacture their own raw produce. Such, indeed, was the importance once attached to these restrictions, that even Lord Chatham went so far as to declare in parliament, that “ the British colonists of “ North America had no *right* to manufacture even a “ nail or a horseshoe.” But the jealousy of manufacturers on this point was surely a little extravagant. To follow out Lord Chatham’s expressions literally, to prevent colonists from manufacturing for themselves the coarse and ordinary objects of every day want, is, of course, impracticable ; and nature itself prohibits them from engaging in manufactures, in the more extended sense of the word. So long as they are thinly spread over a fertile surface, so long as land is cheap and labour dear, their own interest will always point out to them that the most advantageous mode of procuring manufactured commodities is by giving their own raw produce in exchange. And when their numbers are multiplied, and their capital accumulated so far as to render manufactures profitable, they will assuredly cease to be colonists. Such prohibitions, therefore, may be regarded as, in general, little more than nominal. But there are

some few branches of industry in which they have been productive of considerable injury to colonies ; where the article produced is of great bulk, and the process of reducing it to a consumable shape simple and easily executed on the spot, such as that of sugar refining. It has been the ordinary policy of European governments to forbid the refining of sugar in the islands where it is produced ; partly for the advantage of a few capitalists engaged in that business at home, but more, as Mr. Say observes, for that of the ship-owners, to whom it is more profitable to bring home the article in its bulky than its reduced shape. The business of sugar-refining, however, for some reason difficult to conjecture, has been long regarded with very exaggerated views of its importance by European governments. It has been the practice both with ourselves, and others, to encourage it by a drawback on the exportation of refined sugar, rather greater than the amount of the duties which the refiner has to pay for the use of the raw article, amounting, therefore, to a bounty. In France, this was carried so far, that of 40,000,000 francs, the whole amount of duty on colonial sugar in 1832, 19,000,000, were returned to the refiners.\* There has been, I believe, some change since that time. The artificial competition thus created in other countries has materially hurt the business among ourselves ; and we now, therefore, are continuing a prohibition which injures our West Indian citizens, in order to support a branch of industry, which, with all its protection, is in a very failing state. However, in the present state of things, the gain, whatever it is, which accrues to us from the prohibition, can only be regarded as a slight deduction from the tribute which we pay our

\* M'Culloch's Dictionary of Commerce, p. 1095.



colonial producers, by means of the duties excluding foreign sugar.

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We have now gone through, I fear, in somewhat fatiguing detail, the principal points of the so-called colonial system. We have thus far directed our attention wholly to its effects on the wealth of the mother country. The result of our investigations has been, that although, under certain contingencies, and granting a variety of favourable circumstances, a country might gain by the possession of an artificially monopolized market for her manufactured commodities, yet, in actual practice, such gain is found to be almost wholly illusory ; that the disadvantages of a forced trade in manufactured commodities are almost always greater than its advantages, but that to a country possessing the means of manufacturing cheaper than the rest of the world the benefit must be visionary altogether ; while, in order to secure this delusive profit, we are forced to concede to our colonists a monopoly for their raw produce, which is a real and substantial loss to ourselves. It is plain, therefore, that the whole fabric is, in truth, maintained by sacrifices on our part, amounting to an enormous national expenditure.

But it is commonly urged, that if the system of monopoly were to be abandoned, the colonies protected by it must be injured, and our trade with them either crippled or totally lost ; and the enormous value of the colonial trade to this country is then dwelt upon as a sufficient answer to all those who complain of the monopolies by which it is surrounded. The value of that trade is shown by numerical estimates ; and when it has been proved, as it is easily proved, that a greater quantity of British manufactured goods is exported to

the colonial market, in proportion to the population to be supplied, than any other, and a greater quantity of British shipping employed in the commerce, the disputants in question appear to think that sufficient proof is given of the importance of maintaining it. Let us turn again to the pages of Mr. Alison for illustration.

"From Mr. Porter's tables, it appears that, from 1802 to 1835, the trade of great Britain with Europe has declined from 65 per cent. to 48 per cent. With the British colonies in America, it has increased from 18 per cent. to 26 per cent. With the United States of America, it has increased from 6 per cent. to 9 per cent., and that with India has increased from  $3\frac{3}{4}$  per cent. to 5 per cent. It is perfectly clear, therefore, that the reciprocity system has had no tendency to check the serious decay which is going forward in our European trade, while the restrictive system, which is still applied with undiminished force to our colonies, at least as to their intercourse with the parent state, has had as little effect in checking the rapid and astonishing growth, both of our shipping and foreign trade, with those distant parts of the empire. Nothing but adherence to theory and insensibility to facts can enable any person to resist the conclusion, that it is in our intercourse with our colonies that the real sinews of British strength are to be found."\*

I have not space to quote the rest of the passage; in which the author concludes, that our true policy lies in "cultivating, with the most assiduous care, our colonial dependencies." And he illustrates it by an array of statistical tables, the most important results of which I have subjoined in the appendix to my third and pre-

\* Vol. ii. p. 368.

sent lectures, comparing the trade of the British Empire with foreign countries to that with our several colonies.

There is one fallacy on the face of these numerical statements, which it may be as well to caution you against, although I do not mean to say that it materially affects the main question. Several of our colonies are important depôts for our foreign trade. Articles conveyed thither from Britain are reshipped for foreign parts. This takes place in two ways; in the authorized trade and by smuggling. Some of the West India islands, especially Jamaica, send a considerable quantity of English goods, in the regular course of traffic, to the countries of the old Spanish Main. These goods appear in the account of the colony *both as imports and exports*, and swell the apparent consumption of the colony, while the real consuming country, that for which they are ultimately destined, figures for so much less in the account of exports from Britain. I have before me the official tables of revenue and population for the Colonies for 1836, the latest in print. From these the imports from Great Britain into Jamaica appear to have amounted in that year to 2,108,606*l.*; the exports from the island to 3,315,670*l.* Taking the population of Jamaica at 400,000, (rather an over estimate), it would thus appear, that each inhabitant consumed rather more than 5*l.* worth annually of British commodities; that is, about \* ten times as much as each native of the United States or Brazil, which are two of our most valuable foreign markets. But when we examine this table a little farther, we find, in the first place, that a very large proportion

\* See the Appendix to this lecture, where will be found a table illustrating these positions.

of the manufactured goods thus brought into Jamaica are *re-exported to South America*.

The following table comprises the principal :

	Cotton manu- factured Articles.	Iron and Steel and Hardware.	Linens.	Woollens.
Imported into Jamaica -	497,675	100,397	231,444	65,896
Exported from Jamaica -	273,138	12,308	47,256	7,475
Remain for consumption -	224,533	88,089	184,188	58,421

Thus affording a considerable correction of the general result.

The next necessary deduction from the apparent consumption of British goods in the colonies is to be made on account of the unauthorized, or smuggling, trade. Of this it is obviously impossible to estimate the amount. Whether the goods which are conveyed from the British West India islands to St. Thomas and other smuggling *depôts* in the Gulf of Mexico figure as exports in our tables, I have no means of ascertaining. But it is clear that the great importation from Canada into North America, along the line of the St. Lawrence, makes no appearance at all in them. Its amount, if the representations of American manufacturers are to be believed, is very great indeed. The export of British manufactured goods to British America amounted, in 1838, to 1,992,457*l.*, or 1*l.* 7*s.* per head in proportion to the population; that direct to the United States to 7,585,760*l.* only, or about 10*s.* per head\*; but how much of the former sum ought in reality to be added to the latter?†

\* See Quarterly Review, vol. xlii. p. 534.

† The following calculation may possibly assist our conjectures. Our exports to our North American colonies amount to about three millions and a half; the imports from the colonies nearly

Another slight correction necessary to be made, when calculations are framed merely on the gross amount of imports from Great Britain, is for the circumstance that few articles reach foreign ports from Great Britain which are not the produce either of Great Britain or her colonies ; whereas in our colonial trade we are the carriers of the produce of all nations, which appears, along with our own, under the general head of imports from Great Britain.

But these deductions, as I have said, very slightly affect the main argument. It is very true that our colonies are by far our best consumers, and, if the value of our trade is to be reckoned by the consumption of our produce, by far our best customers. But I must intreat your attention once more to the principles which were laid down at the beginning of my last lecture. A customer who consumes what I produce injures instead of benefiting me, if he makes me no return, or a bad one. Now, how stands the case as to the intercourse between ourselves and those colonies whose productions we are forced by fiscal regulations to purchase ?

If I am forced to carry on a traffic in which I sell cheap and buy dear,—if I buy coats with hats manufactured by myself, and, giving my own hats at the market price, am bound by contract to take the coats for twice as much as they are worth—surely I should be reckoned a strange calculator, if I persisted in esti-

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reach 2,000,000*l.* ; while the excess of the exports into, over the imports from, the United States, does not much exceed one fourth. As this difference cannot be accounted for, at least to its full extent, by the exportation of capital which accompanies emigration, a part of it is evidently owing to the fact, that a portion of the goods exported to Canada, are, in truth, intended for the market of the States. Mr. Murray (*British America*, vol. ii. p. 39.) seems to me to have fallen into some confusion on this subject.

mating the value of my trade by its amount ; boasted of the number of hats which I had sold, when I had parted with them for half their value, and measured the value of the coats I had purchased, by setting them all down at the fictitious and exaggerated price I had agreed to give for them. Yet this is precisely, and without any exaggeration, the ordinary line of argument adopted by the advocates of the colonial system. Three millions and a half of British exports to the West Indies, in 1838, purchased less than half as much sugar and coffee as they would have purchased if carried to Cuba and Brazil. Goods to the amount of 1,750,000*l.* were therefore as completely thrown away, without remuneration, as far as Britain is concerned, as if the vessels which conveyed them had perished on the voyage. Yet this sum of 1,750,000*l.* is gravely set down, along with the remainder, as part of the annual "value of our colonial trade."

The common and popular reasonings used on this subject, therefore, turn out, as popular arguments in matters of political economy generally do, to be the merest fallacies. But there is another class of arguments sometimes employed, to which it may be desirable briefly to advert.

There is a prevalent opinion among some classes of political economists (which I have already had occasion to mention, when considering the effects of the abstraction of capital on national wealth), that, in consequence of the rapid accumulation of capital in England, and great competition among its owners for the employment of it, the foreign trade is always carried on by us at something of a disadvantage ; that the effectual demand for our commodities, and the production of those goods which are to exchange for ours, does not increase so rapidly as the supply furnished by ourselves. Some of

these reasoners, consequently, argue, that preference should be given by the government to the home trade, in which the country cannot lose by this over-supply on the one part and deficiency on the other ; and they appear to put the colonial trade on the same footing as the home in this respect. The following passage is extracted from the writings of one of the best known disputants on that side of the question.\* “ It is evident, that if the  
“ general productive powers of a commercial country  
“ increase much faster than those of the world at large  
“ with which it deals, not only does the competition of  
“ capital prevent any permanent increase of its returns,—  
“ not only does the benefit derived from its ingenuity  
“ ultimately fall to the sluggish foreigner, who is supplied with continually increasing quantities of conveniences and luxuries in return for fixed quantities of  
“ his own produce,—but, unless the industry of the foreigner is, by these advantages, stimulated to increased  
“ exertions, the improving country actually loses by its  
“ intercourse with him. Its imports will be diminishing while its exports increase ; and its capitalists must  
“ be contented with diminished profits, its labourers with  
“ diminished wages. The only remedy to this state of  
“ things, which we cannot but consider to have been for  
“ some years past the condition of Britain, is to transfer  
“ the excess of its productive powers, its capital, and  
“ labour, to other spots on the globe possessing facilities  
“ for the production of those objects which it habitually  
“ imports, so as both to diminish the competition of its  
“ home producers, and, at the same time, to impart to  
“ the foreign market a portion of its own energy, industry, ingenuity, and spirit of improvement. We  
“ may perceive from this the important superiority possessed by the home and colonial trades over the

\* Quarterly Review, vol. xlv. p. 24.

"foreign; and a sufficient reason for a preference and encouragement to be afforded, in moderation, by government to the former over the latter. The aggregate demand and supply of goods in the home and colonial markets are necessarily always on a level. What one British subject loses by a change in the relations of particular commodities is gained by another; but, in the foreign trade, the gain may, for a very considerable period, fall exclusively to the foreigner, the loss to the British party."

The writer of this passage appears to me to employ two distinct lines of reasoning, in such a manner as to occasion some slight confusion. Assuming that an export trade is generally carried on at a loss, he argues, in one place, that the colonial trade is better than the foreign, because, in the latter, the foreigner gains what the Englishman loses, while, in the former, both the gainer and the loser are British subjects. Whatever the value of this reasoning may be, it is not to our present purpose, as we are merely engaged in considering the effects of the colonial trade on the wealth of the mother country. But, in another part of the same passage, he appears to contend that, although the foreign trade be carried on at a loss, the same is not necessarily the case with the colonial; because, in the latter, British industry and capital being concerned on both sides, and the colonists having the additional advantage of a fertile soil, the demand for our products may be made to keep pace with the supply, the colonist increasing the mass of his exportable commodities at a rate which the "sluggish foreigner" cannot equal.

Now, without for one moment assenting to the supposition on which the whole of this reasoning is founded, namely, that the export and import trade of this country is less profitable than the home — in other words,



that the producer knows his interest so little as to prefer selling abroad at a loss to selling to his own countryman with profit ; I can nevertheless readily agree to so much of it as shows the economical advantages of colonization. In parting with a portion of our capital for the foundation of colonies (it has been repeatedly said already), we are, in effect, placing it out at interest. Applied to a new and fertile soil, it produces far more than it could produce at home ; and the benefit of that superior productiveness is felt by us in an increased supply of useful commodities, for which we are able to give the produce of our own industry in exchange on favourable terms, from the strength of the demand. And when the trade between the mother country and her rising colony, unfettered by monopoly, is gainful to both, such as that between Britain and her Australian settlements, the strongest opponent of colonial dominion can assign no reason to desire the severance of the connection beyond the very slight expense which it occasions ; there may be great prospective advantages in maintaining it, especially so long as it is necessary to convey a portion of the stream of emigration in that direction, a point to which we shall hereafter have particularly to attend. But when such arguments are adduced in favour of preserving commercial restrictions by which we are the losers, for the sake of maintaining our connection with colonies, we are bound to demand plain proof of the economical utility of that connection. What real reason is there for supposing that the inhabitants of any old and peopled colony, if severed from the mother country, would augment their capital less rapidly, would produce a less rapidly increasing amount of goods to exchange for ours, would cultivate our commercial connection less assiduously, than they do at present ? In considering such a question, the statesman would have to weigh the chances of the interruption of

commerce between independent states from war and mercantile jealousy, against the chances of its interruption between colony and metropolis, by mutual animosity ; the peril of losing a free trade by foreign competition, against that of keeping up a restricted trade under some change of circumstances which may destroy its profits and leave its burdens ; the comparative effect of a state of independence and a state of subjection on the increase of national wealth in a new country. And when our supposed politician had mastered all these abstruse considerations, and struck in his own mind the balance of advantages, he would probably find the whole of his calculations confounded in practice by some unforeseen circumstance—some little cloud arising unnoticed from the sea, and overshadowing in an hour that firmament in which he had traced, to his own satisfaction, the future destinies of his people. There could be no more dangerous error, in politics, than to build up artificial fabrics, not with a view to present emergencies, but to that future which a thousand contingencies may alter in a moment : most of all, if they are built and maintained at a loss. But, in point of fact, this has never been done. The colonial system, like every other system of the kind, was constructed with a view to the present gain of particular classes : once established, it has found ingenious advocates to defend it, on the ground of prospective utility.

Experience, at all events, speaks, as far as we have any, on the opposite side. Before the American Revolution, we possessed colonies even more extensive and valuable than at present. Yet the trade with those colonies, though a thriving one, never seems to have been in a wholly satisfactory state. It was subject, like all other trades involved in prohibitions, to the fluctuations arising from that uncertainty of supply and

demand which is produced by monopoly.\* And during the latter years of the connection, mutual jealousies and antipathies, more powerful even than self-interest, nearly reduced it to ruin. As soon as the connection was severed, what was the consequence? Did the industrious colonists become “sluggish foreigners,” and cease to supply goods fast enough to meet the craving of the Liverpool and London markets? Was our profitable colonial trade turned into a losing foreign trade? All the world knows, on the contrary, that the commerce between the mother country and the colony was but a peddling traffic, compared to that vast international intercourse, the greatest the world has ever known, which grew up between them when they had exchanged the tie of subjection for that of equality,

ἡ φίλους ἀεὶ φίλοις  
πόλεις τε πόλεσι συμμάχους τε συμμάχοις  
συνδεῖ.

No one now really doubts, notwithstanding the hostile tariff of the States, that the separation of our North American colonies has been, in an economical sense, advantageous to us. And yet precisely the same arguments are current at this very day respecting the superior profit of colonial commerce, and the wealth arising from colonial domination, which were in every one's mouth before that great event had occurred, and, by its results, confounded all such calculations. So easily does our reason contrive to forget the strongest lessons, or to evade their force, when prejudice and love of power warp it in the contrary direction.

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It remains for me to notice, under my present head, one more mode in which it has been supposed that co-

\* Say, Cours. iii. 438.

lonies may be made serviceable to the mother country ; namely, by furnishing a revenue, or tribute.

After the various arguments and details into which we have entered, I need not caution you against a fallacy which is occasionally employed, but only by the most superficial reasoners on these subjects ; I mean the speaking of duties levied on the importation of colonial products as so much revenue furnished by those colonies. For example : probably you, as well as myself, may have occasionally seen the 4,000,000*l.* which are annually raised by the duty on West India sugar represented as a tribute from the West Indies ; and inferences raised as to the enormous value of those colonies. A more ludicrous misrepresentation cannot be imagined. We have already seen, that if the colonial monopoly were abolished, or the West India colonies no longer in our possession, we might still raise 4,000,000*l.* on sugar, and save, in all probability, a million by the diminution of price—consumption remaining the same. So that, instead of receiving a tribute of four millions from the planters, we, in effect, pay them a tribute of one. But without attending to such mistakes or sophistries, let us consider the substantial question before us.

It is, of course, a conceivable case, that the revenues drawn by a government from a colony, as well as from any other possession, may be made to exceed its expenditure, and thus afford a surplus, or tribute. But there are two reasons which render such a result highly improbable ; namely, the greater cost of governing a colony, and the greater difficulty of raising a revenue in it. With regard to the first : so long as the colony is to be governed by functionaries, and defended by soldiers and sailors, drawn from the mother country, the cost of their transport must be added to the general expenditure ; and in addition to this, the higher salaries and greater pay

which those employed by government on foreign service always require. Although the necessities of life may sometimes be cheap in a colony, luxuries, and all imported articles, are invariably dear. Every soldier in the French colonies costs, according to M. Say, twice as much as if he had remained at home ; and I believe the proportion is rather higher in our own service. Civil functionaries must be well paid ; because, without securing the services of a good class of functionaries, it is impossible to prevent speculation and misconduct in localities far removed from the superintendence of ordinary discipline and public opinion. Almost every item of public expenditure is higher, many much higher, in the colonies than at home.

As to the second of these causes : taxes are raised ultimately either from general profits, wages, or monopoly profits ; that is, rent. Profits and wages being usually high in new countries, may seem, at first sight, to be fit subjects for taxation. Yet it is impossible to carry it far without ruining a colony ; because, if this were done, capital would speedily leave the settlement, and emigration to it would cease. In an old country, capitalists will endure a considerable amount of taxation rather than break the connections with attach them to it. But when men have moved to a new one, simply for the sake of obtaining a more ample return for their industry, it would be impossible to tie them and their riches to the soil if any considerable proportion of that return were forcibly taken from them. To this subject we shall revert hereafter.

There remains the resource of monopoly profits, or rent. Comparatively little harm would be done to colonial industry by the raising of a revenue to any amount if it fell wholly on this source. If government were to monopolize the whole surplus produce of the land of a country — as is usual in the East — no direct injury to

production would follow ; it would merely stand in the place of the landlords, and consume its share of the produce much as they would have consumed it. But in most colonies (wherein, that is, the extent of fertile and unoccupied land is considerable) rent is necessarily low, if not unknown altogether, and can furnish no source of revenue. The principal exception to this general rule is where the colony possesses peculiar advantages for the production of any commodity. Let us take the precious metals for an instance. The value of the precious metals, in Europe, at any period, is regulated by the cost of extracting and transporting them *from the least productive mines then worked*. The difference between the produce of the least productive and the more productive mines is rent. If, therefore, in any country the mines are uniformly, or for the most part, more productive than elsewhere, that country must yield a very great amount of rent, or surplus produce. Now this, as I mentioned in a former lecture, was precisely the case with Mexico under the old Spanish government ; and, accordingly, that province seems not only to have furnished enormous rents to its landed proprietors, but a very considerable revenue, over and above all its expenditure, to the crown of Spain. It is said that the same power derives a considerable tribute from Cuba at the present time. And in our own Australian colonies—although we are far from receiving a tribute from them, the expenditure still very greatly exceeding the income—the latter is, comparatively speaking, very large. The revenue of New South Wales, independent of the price of land sold, seems to have amounted to upwards of 200,000*l.* per annum for some years past. Every settler, therefore, has paid about 50*s.* per annum to the state ; about twice as much as a French citizen. This very high amount of public contributions is owing, in

part, to the great profits lately made by the use of the soil for sheep-farming, on which much of the taxation imposed ultimately falls.

These, however, are extraordinary cases. In general, it has been found, not only that colonies have not afforded a surplus revenue to the mother country, but that the latter has maintained their public establishments by very large contributions of her own. By an act passed in the eighteenth year of George III., England bound herself not to levy any taxes or duties on the colonies, except for their own use; a provision which circumstances have rendered somewhat nugatory, since few of our settlements have ever paid their own civil establishments, and none the extra military expense of protecting them.

There is, however, yet another manner in which colonies, of which the soil yields rent, may furnish a tribute or revenue to the mother country. This is by remittances to absentee proprietors, resident in the latter. Undoubtedly a considerable amount is in this way annually transmitted to England from our West India islands; of which many of the landowners are non-resident, and mortgages are held by English capitalists on the estates of many more. The imports from the West Indies have averaged, of late years, upwards of 8,000,000*l.* in value. The exports to them, little more than 4,000,000*l.*\* A very large proportion of this excess of imports over exports consists of produce sent here for the payment of rents and interest of mortgages due in England. I scarcely need remind you, after what has been said in my last lecture on the subject of absenteeism, that there could not be a greater error than to regard the whole of

\* To take a single year, 1833, by way of criterion. The exports from the whole West Indies in that year was 8,448,000*l.*; imports, 941,000*l.*

this sum, whatever it may be, as so much annually added to our national income.\* A portion of it is exchanged for British manufactured articles, a portion for foreign manufactured articles, used by the owner resident in England. But if that owner had resided in Jamaica he would equally have consumed those manufactures, both English and foreign. The gain, therefore, on this portion accrues only from the circumstance of the *act of consumption taking place in England*; which, in one sense, may be said to render the country richer, as was explained in my last lecture; but the productive industry of England gains nothing, so far, by the owner's residence here. But the true addition to our revenue, or rather to our national income, consists in that portion of the West Indian produce so imported which, if the landlord had remained at home, would have been consumed by him there, or exchanged for foreign commodities, but, in consequence of his residence in England, is exchanged for English commodities. In his own country he would have fed his negro menial servants on North American flour and fish, while his English servants consume English provisions; his house would have been built and repaired by the labour of negroes, consuming West Indian or American products, instead of English masons and carpenters; West Indian shop-keepers, instead of English, would have subsisted on the profits of retail dealing with him, and they, too, in part, would have consumed West Indian or American produce. All these items, be they great or small (it is impossible exactly to calculate their amount, but we should probably err

\* See Malthus, Political Economy, p. 390. "I see no difference between a *present from abroad* and the unusual profits of a new foreign trade, in their effects upon the wealth of a state. They are equally calculated to increase the wealth of a community, by an increase both of the quantity *and value* of the produce obtained."



in estimating it very high), constitute the gain which the domiciling country obtains from foreign sojourners, and which may, in one sense, be termed a tribute. In the case of the West India colonies, it ought to be admitted as a set-off against the annual expenditure which they cause.\*

The amount of that expenditure which Great Britain is annually called on to incur on behalf of her colonies, over and above their own revenues, although it has been much exaggerated by opposers of the colonial system, is still very great. By a parliamentary paper of the session of 1835 †, it appears, that the total charge on our revenue, on account of their military, naval, and civil establishments, amounted to 2,360,000*l.* To this must be added, in fairness, the annual loss to this country occasioned, as before explained, by the colonial monopolies, chiefly those of sugar and timber, which is estimated by Sir H. Parnell, in his work on Financial Reform, apparently on reasonable grounds, at two millions more ; and the charge which we have recently incurred for the liberation of our colonial slaves, is not less than 600,000*l.* or 700,000*l.* per annum. If we were to add to these sums the cost of the wars of which our colonies have furnished the direct cause, the account against us would be enormous indeed. “ By the war of 1739 “ (said Lord Sheffield), which may be truly called an “ American contest, we incurred a debt of upwards of “ 81,000,000*l.* ; by the war of 1755, we incurred a further debt of 71,500,000*l.* ; and by the war of the

\* See Edinburgh Review, No. cxlvi. p. 345., where the writer contends that, as all the capital from which the produce of the West Indian colonies is raised was originally furnished by England, a fair deduction must be made, for the interest upon it, from the amount of West Indian produce exported to England without return.

† M'Culloch's Commercial Dictionary, Supplement to 1839. Colonies.

"revolt we have added to both these debts nearly "100,000,000*l.* more. And thus we have expended "a far larger sum in defending and retaining our colonies than the value of all the merchandise we have "ever sent them." This, however, is rhetoric rather than argument: it is hard to set down as expenditure occasioned by our colonies, sums of which by far the greater part was spent to gratify our own pugnacity.

But this is a digression from my present subject; though it can hardly be considered an inapposite one, when it is remembered how large a portion of our wars of the last century were undertaken chiefly with the view of protecting and strengthening that very trade with our colonies which, I have endeavoured to show you, we were crippling and injuring all the while by the manifold restraints of our prohibitive system. And the true ground on which that system is still defended by many of its supporters is, that the favour thus afforded to the colonies (for the effect of the system, as I have endeavoured to point out, is now almost confined to the affording favour to them) tends to keep them in connection with the mother country; a notion which I do not believe to be well founded, but which, if it be, affords indeed a political justification for maintaining the system, but not an economical one. The misfortune is, that its supporters will not be satisfied with putting its vindication on their own real ground. They cannot be content without maintaining that the country gains by it, in the immediate course of commercial transactions, as well as in respect of the maintenance of the national defence and supremacy. And those whose reasons could not be persuaded of the reality of the commercial gain, have long had to submit to the imputation of entertaining novel theories and un-English sentiments; as if the economical defence of

the system were necessarily involved in the political, and the principles of Malthus and Ricardo were inseparably connected with those of Franklin and Bentham. You, I am sure, will learn to despise this foolish and vulgar outcry. There is no novelty in the plain and simple arguments which show the mischief of restrictions on trade; but if they were novel, they would not be the less cogent. There is nothing un-English in pointing out the fact, that England suffers a certain loss by the maintenance of a particular system: but if it were otherwise, loss of country is a poor substitute in inquiry for loss of truth.

But these are considerations which need but little concern us now. The rapid tide of sublunary events is carrying us inevitably past that point at which the maintenance of colonial systems and navigation laws was practicable, whether it were desirable or no. We are borne helplessly along with the current; we may struggle and protest, and marvel why the barriers which ancient forethought had raised against the stream now bend like reeds before its violence, but we cannot change our destiny. The monopoly of the West India islands cannot stand; and its fall will be followed by the crash of those minor monopolies which subsisted along with it; for the branches of the colonial system were nearly connected with each other. And when these are gone, the same curious result will follow which has attended the overthrow of so many other institutions and systems, political and intellectual, which have held for their respective periods a powerful sway over the minds of men. All the theories which have been founded on it by induction, or raised on baseless assumptions, in order to support it,—all the volumes of statistical facts, tortured into arguments,—all the records of the eloquence or the reasoning by which it has

been defended, which once were in vogue with the million, which swayed senates and silenced captious objectors, and governed and delighted the public mind, — will pass with it into nothingness, or speak to us as it were in a dead language. Let us look back a few years, and ask where are the monuments of all the zeal and ingenuity which was once vented in defence of the Slave Trade? or of the Stuart succession? or in opposing the mitigation of the penal code? Buried together with the learning which was expended on the topics of witchcraft, alchemy, astrology, and the Ptolemæan system. I do not make these comparisons in any sneering or critical spirit, but merely from the illustration they afford of the dependence of that vanity of vanities, the fame of human speculations, on the durability of the subject or the cause which gives origin to them. We stand, in respect of economical philosophy, as well as other matters, on the very verge of time, between two distinct eras. I do not say that we are wiser than our predecessors; but circumstances have thrown a new light on the subject-matter of our studies; and, whatever theories may occupy the thoughts of a future generation, of one thing we may be sure, — that the shadowy arguments by which commercial prohibitions have been so long defended will be remembered only as ingenious and worthless disputations on imaginary premises.

NOTE. — I subjoin the amount of British and foreign tonnage respectively employed in our trade, with the principal "reciprocity" countries, in 1839. From the Annual Tables of the Board of Trade, just published.

			Tons British.	Foreign.
Sweden	-	-	8,359	49,270
Norway	-	-	2,582	109,228
Denmark	-	-	5,536	106,960
Prussia	-	-	11,470	229,208
United States	-	-	92,482	282,005

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE VIII.

A TABLE, showing the Quantity of the principal British Manufactures exported to different Countries in 1838.

	Population. (In round Numbers.)	Cotton manu- factured Goods.	Woollens.	Hardware and Cutlery.	Total Manu- factures. (De- clared Value.)	Proportion per Head.
						£ s. d.
North American Colonies	-	1,400,000	359,632	76,794	1,992,457	1 7 0
West Indies	-	1,000,000	95,412	85,169	3,393,441	3 8 0
Cape of Good Hope	-	150,000	64,778	22,660	623,323	4 3 6
Australia	-	130,000	104,120	44,739	1,336,662	10 5 0
Mauritius	-	90,000	-	12,990	467,342	5 3 6
France	-	33,000,000	523,942	242,292	7,813,225	0 1 5
Holland and Germany	-	36,000,000	53,708	58,655	2,314,141	0 4 10
Russia	-	55,000,000	1,034,405	118,083	8,548,329	0 0 7
Portugal, and Islands	-	3,800,000	224,383	13,875	1,663,243	0 6 7
Italy	-	21,000,000	258,157	49,598	1,238,727	0 2 10
United States	-	15,000,000	1,854,266	661,704	3,076,231	0 10 0
Foreign West Indies	-	1,500,000	65,822	51,973	7,585,760	0 15 0
Brazil	-	6,500,000	228,932	51,570	1,025,392	0 8 6
					2,606,604	

\*.\* The reader will find a slightly different calculation in the *Colonial Gazette* for May 30. 1840.

## **PART III.**

**PROGRESS OF WEALTH AND SOCIETY IN COLONIES.**



## LECTURE IX.

SCARCITY OF LABOUR IN NEW COLONIES; ITS EFFECTS ON  
THE PROGRESS OF WEALTH.

I PROCEED, in the next place, to enter upon the more important division of my subject — the economical development of colonies, and the causes by which their advance may be retarded or accelerated.

In doing this, it will be necessary that I should pass over for the present the practical difficulties which always occur in the first foundation of such establishments, and consider the young community as already launched. On a future occasion we may, perhaps, be able to enter into some details respecting the first steps which are preliminary to the formation of new settlements. It is, I fear, next to impossible, that any first experiment in colonization should succeed; if history be consulted, it will be found that, in modern times, none ever has succeeded, in the way and at the rate which its projectors have expected. “Of the colonies “planted in modern times,” says Mr. Wakefield, “more “have perished than have prospered.” Either they have failed altogether, and it has been necessary to commence the work afresh, or they have struggled into prosperity through a long series of privations and discouragements. Far from the first settlers on a new soil being the most amply recompensed for their labours, they have almost invariably fallen victims in the cause, and served only by their own sacrifice to promote the success of some new band of colonists. “The moral



“and mechanical habits,” says Malthus \*, “adapted to the mother country, are frequently not so to the new settled one, and to external events, many of which are unforeseen ; and it is to be remarked, that none of the English colonies became very considerable till the necessary manners were born and grew up in the country.”\* Neither courage nor intelligence, nor ample means, nor unwearied enterprise, seem to serve as substitutes for that appreciation of circumstances, that practical adaptation of his means to the proposed end, which experience only gives to the emigrant. His mind, as well as his body, must become acclimatized before his industry can be really effective, or his operations well directed ; and some years must generally pass before either the one or the other object is attained. This subject, however, I must for the present pass over ; merely remarking, that it is impossible to place in too strong a light the errors which our national jealousy and contracted views have imported into our popular theories of colonization. It has long been a subject of complaint with us, that of our poorer class of emigrants who go to Canada, so large a proportion invariably find their way, after the first winter, or earlier, across the frontier into the United States. Had it been practicable, we should, doubtless, long ago have prevented this second emigration, and forced them to locate themselves, raw and unprepared, in the forests of our own provinces. We ought to be able to appreciate more justly the great value to us of a country like the United States, where there is an active demand for labour in the old settled districts, in close juxtaposition to our North American possessions. In this way a great number of persons, who would be really useless to our colonies in the outset, are annually drafted off. By their apprenticeship as labourers on

\* Essay on Population, vol. iii. chap. 4.

public works, or as hired workmen in the better inhabited parts of the country, they acquire some degree of experience in its habits, and become more fitted for the wilderness ; while our own unoccupied and fertile lands attract those settlers, both British and American, who have acquired somewhat of the necessary experience, and are fit to begin the work of civilization.\*

Let us however, for the present, regard these difficulties as subdued, and reflect on the principal causes which tend to produce the prosperity of new settlements. Adam Smith disposes of the subject briefly enough, attributing that prosperity to one great cause, economically speaking, “plenty of good land.” The abundance of produce, he says, at once induces the landlord to collect labour from all quarters, and enables him to reward that labour by high wages ; and the labourer is speedily enabled to become independent, invest his accumulated capital in land, and employ other labourers in turn.

The fundamental principles of the subject cannot be better expressed than they are by this great writer, in the well-known passage which I have here briefly condensed. But a very little reflection will convince us how necessary it is to take into consideration many other circumstances, before we can arrive at the full comprehension of it.

Land, however rich, is of very little value to the owner without capital to cultivate it. The soil on which our first American colonists landed, when the primitive forest was removed, was prodigiously fertile — as fertile

\* Of late years, the principal emigration from England has been directed to the United States and the Australian colonies ; from Scotland to Upper Canada, Nova Scotia, and Cape Breton ; from Ireland to Canada and Newfoundland. But of the emigrants from the latter country, a great number choose the Canada passage merely as the cheapest way of reaching the United States.

as that of the Western states of this day. It was to be had for nothing in the state of forest ; but it costs from 3*l.* to 4*l.* to clear a single acre of it, principally expended in labour. Of the first settlers, few were rich enough to command so much of the labour of others as was necessary to execute this operation to any extent ; they wasted their strength in insulated efforts ; they perished, therefore, miserably : ten or twenty thousand settlers are said to have landed in Virginia in the latter years of Elizabeth ; and in the reign of James I., Virginia had to be colonized anew.

Land and capital are both useless unless labour can be commanded. When the colony at Swan River was founded, magnificent grants were made to the chief contributor, Mr. Peel : he took out with him, it is said, 50,000*l.*, and 300 individuals of the labouring classes ; but they were all fascinated by the prospect of obtaining land in a country where the preliminary labour of clearing is unusually slight ; and in a short while he was left without a servant to make his bed, or to fetch him water from the river.

These, it may be said, are instances taken from the very beginning of infant settlements ; such errors are likely to be avoided in their farther progress. If a judicious system of co-operation were put in practice, so that no labour or capital were wasted, a much smaller amount of both would be requisite to produce the desired results ; and “ plenty of good land ” would be, what Adam Smith represents it, nearly the one thing needful. This is undoubtedly true ; but we must deal with men such as we find them. We must remember, that the leading desire of every man who seeks a home in the wilderness is to make himself independent. It may be that, as men are wont to reconcile as far as they can their views of interest and their inclinations, he believes,

that in so doing he will best further his other great object, the acquisition of wealth. But experience teaches us that this is often a delusion. If Mr. Peel's labourers had remained with him, they might in a short time have accumulated earnings sufficient to commence the career of landowners under the most favourable circumstances. As it was, many perished, some returned to England, and only a few, after long struggles, have attained at last a state of comparative ease. And similar causes will continue to produce similar, although less striking, effects in the whole course of colonization; that is, until a country is peopled up to that average mark which we vaguely designate as "full." So long as abundance of good land is to be had for little, so long it is the apparent interest of the farmer, as well as most suitable to his inclination, to exhaust that which he occupies, and then to remove to a fresh spot, instead of endeavouring to improve his original farm. "When you talk to the "American farmers," says Mr. Stuart, "of the necessity of manuring with a view to preserve the fertility of "the soil, they almost uniformly tell you, that the expense "of labour renders it far more expedient for them, as soon "as their repeated cropping very much diminishes the "quantity of the grain, to lay down the land in grass, "or make a purchase of new land in the neighbourhood, or even to sell their cleared land and proceed "in quest of a new settlement, than to adopt a system "of rotation of crops assisted by manure." In short, there are two principles constantly at work: the desire of obtaining land, which is hostile to all combination of labour; the natural diminution in the fertility of occupied land, which continually urges its possessors to change it for fresh. Where these prevail, there must be great obstacles in the way of accumulation of capital, and of the raising of surplus produce, and a constant

tendency of the population towards barbarism by their dispersion; each settler, as he advances in the wilderness, leaving behind him whole tracts which he considers as unprofitable, or which he has rendered so by exhausting them.

These premises are, undoubtedly, true. We must next examine the deductions which have been drawn from them by the new school of writers on colonization, who have thrown, of late years, so much light upon the subject. Let us take them from the pages of its two most distinguished disciples; the latter of whom, indeed, has high claims to be regarded as its founder — Colonel Torrens, and Mr. Gibbon Wakefield; to both of whom we shall have to look for assistance and enlightenment over a great part of the ground which now remains for us to traverse.

“It is impossible,” says Colonel Torrens\*, “to establish a colony in an unreclaimed country, without applying capital and labour to its waste lands. . . . There is, in every country, some proportion or other between capital and labour which is most conducive to the progress of wealth, and which gives the highest rates of profit and of wages which the state of industry and the quality of the soil render possible. This proportion is the best proportion; and it may be called the proportion of equilibrium and of rest; because it is the obvious interest, both of capitalists and labourers, not to disturb, but to maintain it. Should the capital and labour first planted in the colony be in this best proportion, in this proportion they will naturally remain.” “The ultimate object of government,” says Mr. Wakefield†, “being the greatest progress of colonization, its immediate ob-

\* Colonization of South Australia, 13.

† England and America, ii. 149.

“ject is, that there should exist in the colony those  
“circumstances which are best calculated to attract  
“capital and labour, but especially capital, from an old  
“country.”

The principle, therefore, which these writers lay down is, that government ought to restrict the natural, or, as it may more properly be termed, *casual*, distribution of capital and labour which takes place over the surface of a newly occupied country, so as to secure to capitalists a supply of labourers for the most profitable cultivation of the soil; to secure to labourers the advantage of abundant capital to render their operations more productive, and remunerate their industry more highly. The peculiar mode in which they propose to effect these objects, namely, by setting a high price on unoccupied land, and applying the proceeds to the purpose of emigration, must be reserved for future discussion. At present we are only concerned with the inquiry, whether there is any thing in the condition of young colonies which calls for the adoption of *any* regulations to control the natural course of circumstances?

Now it is a rule prescribed by common sense, in all economical discussion, that the burden of proof lies on the party which proposes such regulations. The principles of the school of writers on systematic colonization to whom I have alluded may be reduced, I think, to two elementary propositions. Let us first attend to some general considerations respecting them, and proceed to examine how far they are borne out by historical facts.

The propositions in question are, I think, the following:—

1. That it is desirable to provide colonists with a greater supply of labourers, to work on their account, than their capital would naturally attract.

2. That it is desirable to prevent the population of new colonies from spreading over so large and scattered a surface of land as it would be tempted to occupy, were every facility given for the acquisition of land.

These are their practical principles ; and another proposition appears to be implied in some of their reasonings : that an ample supply of hired or compulsory labour tends not only to increase the wealth of the community, but also to produce this second object, namely, the concentration of the people.

Now it is important to observe, that the colonies of modern times may be divided into two very different classes : the difference having arisen, in some, from the different views with which they were originally founded ; in others, from various circumstances subsequent to their foundation.

The first are those which have established themselves in countries *possessing no peculiar advantages for the production, by agricultural or mining labour, of articles of value in the foreign market.* Many of these have been originally formed by colonists, anxious only to find a refuge from political or social uneasiness at home, not to become the producers of a great amount of wealth. Others, founded with views of profit, have been forced to pursue a less ambitious career, from natural impediments in the way of their advance to opulence. In colonies like these the first object, and it may be said the main object, of their social economy, has been the providing of a sufficient maintenance for a population of moderate wants. Exportable wealth, of course, they have had, otherwise they could not have provided themselves with the common comforts of life ; but its production has been merely a subsidiary end, and not the principal object of their existence. Such were the English plantations in the northern part of

the United States, for at least the first century and a half after their foundation—countries of which almost the whole population was engaged in agriculture, and yet the chief exportable wealth consisted, not in agricultural commodities, but in the produce of what may be termed secondary branches of industry—the timber of their forests and the fish of their seas; which traded in these alone with Europe, and exchanged only a small surplus of their corn and cattle against the peculiar staples of other colonies. Such are, even more exclusively, our North American possessions at the present day; such was the original character of our Australian settlements, until the very recent discovery of their great capabilities for the production of wool. \*

The second class of colonies comprises all those in which the industry of the settlers has been principally turned towards the raising of staple articles of produce for the European market—articles for which their soil or climate has been found to possess peculiar capability; or towards mining operations, which fall under the same general law. To this belong most of the ancient Spanish and Portuguese colonies in South America, the southern provinces of the present United States, and the establishments of all European nations in the West Indies.

\* Sheep's wool exported from Australia:—

Years.		lbs.
1807	-	245
1813	-	32,971
1825	-	411,600
1835	-	3,776,191

“In the long period during which Canada has been a settled country, there are no instances on record of large fortunes being realised by the hewers of timber in her native forests: in the brief period which has elapsed since the fine-wooled sheep was introduced into Australia, the growers of wool upon her native pastures have bounded into opulence.”—*Colonel Torrens on the Colonization of South Australia*, 154.



It will appear, on consideration, that those elementary propositions of the theory of "systematic colonization," to which I have already called your attention, are by no means equally applicable to these two classes of settlements.

When a colony is established on a soil possessing no capabilities for the raising of any peculiar produce fit for the foreign market, the first impulse of the settlers is generally to spread themselves over the country, each taking possession of whatever spot of fertile land he may secure, and each tilling his own farm; some, possessed of a little capital, with the assistance of a few hired labourers, chiefly emigrants not yet located; others, by their own industry, and with that small combination of labour which the voluntary assistance of neighbours in new countries commonly affords. And although it is said (by Mr. Wakefield), that "scarce any operation of agriculture can be *very* productive, unless there be employed in it several pairs of hands in combination, and constantly at the same particular work, at the same time, and for a considerable period of time together\*," yet it is certain that the average industry of an unassisted colonist on fertile soil, and in a temperate climate, will be sufficiently productive, after a little time, to afford him, not only the necessaries of life, but a certain quantity of surplus to exchange for its comforts.† Now, suppose the tract had been "systematically" colonized, and that each settler had been furnished with a sufficient number of labourers, effectually restrained from deserting his service, and from

\* England and America, vol. ii. p. 10.

† It appears that the settler in the Canadian backwoods must, in general, "sustain nearly two years of severe toil, before he can derive the slightest benefit from his exertions," and two or three more of continued labour with slowly increasing produce. — *Murray's British America*, vol. iii. p. 140.

spreading themselves over the land as independent farmers, it would undoubtedly raise a greater surplus: a farm cultivated by a capitalist and twenty labourers would produce more than ten small clearings, each managed by the slovenly industry of one farmer and one labourer — mere earth-scratchers, as Mr. Wakefield calls them. But, by the supposition, there would be a difficulty in finding a market for this additional surplus. If Upper Canada were amply provided with indented labourers or slaves, it might produce more corn and cattle than it now produces; but Canadian corn and cattle are not, like Georgian cotton and West Indian sugar, articles for which there is a constant and urgent demand out of the colony: the distance from any available market is very great; and any such extended production would probably turn out a very unprofitable speculation. Canada, therefore, would gain little or nothing, at present, by the change from the system of small-farming to that of combined capital and labour, even if the labour came uninvited, and no sacrifices were made to secure it. And if it was necessary to make sacrifices — to undergo the moral contamination of slave or convict labour, or to make the economical sacrifice of raising the price of land, and checking the spread of cultivation, in order to procure the labour of free emigrants — it would assuredly not be worth the while of the Canadians to make the attempt.

Still less would the concentration of her inhabitants, produced by any artificial means, be of advantage to such a colony in the earlier stage of her progress. Concentration of inhabitants of course can only take place where some of the settlers relinquish the advantage of appropriating the most fertile land within their reach, in order to secure the real or supposed advantages of congregation. Now fertile soil is, to the settler, the

machine with which he works ; it is that for the sake of which he is content to forego all the benefits which he might have derived from remaining a member of an older and denser community. To prevent his occupation of the most fertile soil within reach, either by raising its price, or by any other conventional arrangement, is to force him to resort to the use of a less productive machine ; it is to force him to waste a portion of his precious labour, to forego a part of his expected reward, with a view to certain speculative advantages for the community. It may be indeed true, as I have on a former occasion mentioned, that the mere spirit of independence may occasionally induce a man to take a wrong view of his own interest, and to move into the wilderness, when, for his own sake, he would better have remained in the clearing. But these are only exceptions to the general rule : nor could even these be prevented, except by a sacrifice involving greater loss. It is the energy and enterprise of the individual which leads him to commit the oversight. You cannot save him from the commission of the oversight, but by controlling that energy and enterprise, and preventing him from performing the part for which he is evidently fitted—that of a pioneer of civilization. And this is, after all, the most formidable of all the objections to any scheme for controlling the natural course of capital and labour in a new colony, for confining its injudicious expansion within a belt of restrictions, to use a favourite metaphor of the advocates of those schemes. Every deduction from the liberty of man as a free agent is, in an economical sense, a diminution of his power. This is true in old countries, truer still in new ones ; it forms the immovable basis of the general argument against public interference with the production and distribution of wealth.

Are then these colonies—such, namely, as belong to the class to which we have as yet confined ourselves—to remain, it will be said, always in a state of poverty and infancy? Are their lands to be always carelessly cultivated by the scanty labour of small farmers, hastening to desert them as soon as they become unproductive\*, spreading themselves over enormous tracts, with deserts interposed between their scattered habitations? Is property never to accumulate? are towns never to rise? On the contrary, the progress of such a community towards wealth, if no external circumstance interfere, is in reality fixed and certain, and slow only when compared with the impatient anticipations of political philosophers. And there cannot, I must add, be more palpable exaggerations than those in which some writers have dealt, who have endeavoured to contrast its prospects with those of settlements founded according to their own economical views. In the first place, however prone colonists may be to dispersion, there is a limit which the boldest backwoodsman does not pass; and that is fixed by the situation of the nearest market. “In the history of American colonization,” says Mr. Wakefield himself, “there is but one instance of a

\* The same complaints of depopulation and abandonment of land, which are now heard in so many districts which have passed from the first into the second stage of improvement, such as the eastern states of America, were rife throughout the Anglo-American colonies a little before the revolution, when they were far less populous than now. See a passage from the traveller Kalm, quoted in Adam Smith, p. 103., M'Culloch's edition. “We are told by one who knows their country well, that 200,000 people, bred to the cultivation of the earth, are thrown out of employment for want of land.”—*Political Essays concerning the Present State of the British Empire*, 1772, p. 384. After all, the spirit of restless enterprise, so peculiar to the inhabitants of new countries, appears to have quite as much to do with it as any economical cause. Mr. Shirreff seems to think that in Canada the restoration of the most exhausted land is easier than the removal of a dense forest. — *Murray's British America*, vol. iii. p. 131.

“person having settled totally out of the reach of markets—the celebrated Daniel Boon.” As the markets extend, therefore, the settlers will spread; but no faster. Meanwhile, a certain quantity of capital is accumulated by the farmers: they advance from a state of necessity at first to comfort, then to competence. There is no doubt a strong tendency among many to desert their farm as soon as its cultivation begins to require more labour or render less immediate profit; but there is a counteracting tendency also, the love of home, the love of adorning and preserving that which each has won from the wilderness; if many spirits are seduced by the one, many also follow the latter. Meanwhile, subsidiary branches of industry, such as fisheries, or coarse manufactures, arise; people are congregated round the spots most favourable for such pursuits; towns are built; land rises in value from their vicinity; soil, perhaps, which had been cultivated while it retained its original fertility, and abandoned as soon as it had lost it, acquires new and secondary attractions, and is brought into permanent occupation. When once the accumulation of capital has begun, the remainder of the advance to opulence is easily achieved; nor is it necessary for me to trace the steps by which the peddling trade is converted into a vast commerce, the towns become cities, and the scattered farms a wide tract of cultivated land. All this, I repeat, not only *may*, but inevitably *will*, take place, unless there be some extrinsic interruptions to the course of events, in every colony of this description, possessed of good natural advantages; even although land be from the beginning lavished on all who can appropriate it, and there be no provision whatever for securing a supply of hired or compulsory labour.

And it cannot fail to be observed, that prosperity

thus gradually attained is of the safest and most certain character. A community may advance far more rapidly to wealth from natural advantages in the production of exportable commodities ; but its fortunes are liable to be overthrown as rapidly as they have arisen, by the competition of newer soils, or by a mere change in the demand for particular articles of consumption. But a society of which the course is such as I have described, is independent of all these external vicissitudes, or feels their shocks but slightly ; and they may fairly be compared in the language of the Poet, who is not answerable for the absurd practical doctrines which his beautiful verses have sometimes been dragged in to illustrate : —

“ Trade’s proud empire hastes to swift decay,  
As ocean sweeps the labour’d mole away ;  
While self-supported power can time defy,  
As rocks resist the billows and the sky.”

And these views are so amply justified by the broad and plain results which history presents to us, that to support them by argument is almost a waste of labour. A line drawn from the Atlantic to the Mississippi, nearly along the course of the Delaware and the Ohio, will separate pretty accurately the two classes of colonies which I have distinguished in this lecture. To the south of it lie the regions where the great staples of American export have been raised, namely tobacco, rice, and, more lately, cotton. To the north, those which produce corn and cattle, and from which little or no exportation takes place to Europe, except of timber. Let us fix our attention for a while on a small portion of this latter region ; namely, the older New England states. Never were colonies founded under circumstances more necessarily tending, if the theories which we are now considering were true, to perpetual weak-

ness and poverty. Their soil is, at the best, only of moderate fertility ; while they border on the rich and interminable regions of the West. No restrictions were ever adopted in the granting of their lands: each settler could always provide himself with the most fertile, wherever he might find it. They never had, to any extent worth mentioning, the assistance of slave labour, or convict labour, or apprenticed labour ; and they were peopled by the most enterprising and independent of men, the least attached, it is generally thought, of all men, to home and its associations, — the most determined enemies to all control. From them have issued innumerable swarms of emigrants ; insomuch, that a great part of the United States has actually been colonized by descendants of the first New England colonists. It is true, that, on their first foundation, they exhibited a degree of concentration not often found in English settlements ; partly from the strong religious and municipal feelings which bound the settlers together in townships or villages, partly from the density of the forest, partly from the hostility of the natives. But this congregation lasted only during the few first years of struggles and privation. Self-interest soon prevailed over the earlier principles of their foundation. Twenty years after their settlement they found Massachusetts too narrow for them ; and swarmed into Connecticut and New Hampshire, “because the Bay was over-“stocked.” In 1682, the governor of Connecticut writes of the land of that province, “what is fit is taken “up ; what remains must be taken out of the fire, by “hard blows, and for small recompence.” Connecticut had then scarcely more than 10,000 inhabitants.\*

What could be prognosticated of such settlements as

\* Grahame's History of the United Provinces before the Revolution of 1688, ii. 62. Chalmer's United Colonies, 308.

these, according to the arguments which might be deduced from some passages of Mr. Wakefield and his followers, but, at best, a slow, languishing advance through long periods of poverty and discouragements? Let us contemplate the picture presented by their actual condition. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island now have about 1,200,000 inhabitants on 12,000 square miles English, or 100 to a square mile. Connecticut alone, of which, in the opinion of its governor, all the good land was taken up when it had 10,000 people, has now 300,000, almost all agriculturists. But the population of England, at the beginning of the last century, was not much above 5,000,000 on 50,000 square miles. So that New England has reached, in 200 years from its first settlements a density of population equal to that which Old England had attained, six centuries after the Norman conquest. It is now, notwithstanding its enormous annual drain by emigration, actually suffering under the evils incident to an old and over-peopled country. There is a very remarkable passage, in Miss Martineau's "Society in America," respecting the embarrassed state of many of the New England land-owners, from the difficulty which they already experience in finding productive employment for their capital. Surely, when we hear of the necessity of stimulating the progress of young colonies, through artificial combinations of capital and labour, and reflect on the advance of communities like this, in which no such systems were ever attempted, we cannot but be tempted to ascribe such proposals to that impatience of gradual results, which is the common parent of rash political speculations.

Let us now turn our attention to the state of things in those colonies, where the chief employment consists in *raising staple articles of produce for foreign mar-*



*kets.* In such communities as these, it is obvious that the necessity for an ample supply of labourers is of a far more urgent character. In them, all that has been said of the importance of combined labour to the productive employment of capital is of pointed application. And in point of fact, all such colonies have hitherto, in some way or other, been supplied from without, or have found the means of supplying themselves, with this essential condition of their improvement. It is this necessity which caused the enslavement of the original inhabitants of Spanish America; which produced negro slavery and the slave trade; which has turned to profit the compulsory toil of convicts; and to satisfy which, without a resort to any of these odious resources, is now the greatest practical problem of colonization.

It is, however, to be observed, that settlements of this description have often flourished for a time, even although exposed to all the difficulties arising from the dispersion of settlers, and the want of compulsory labour. In the early progress of colonies, and while the land immediately adjoining to ports and navigable rivers, or otherwise possessing facilities for transport, is still unexhausted, raw produce can often be raised for the foreign market in considerable quantities by the rude labour of small land owners. We have already seen that this was the ordinary course of events in the West Indian islands; that the first period in the history of each, presents the aspect of a fertile region, carelessly cultivated with a considerable profit by numerous free settlers. We have seen that Portorico exhibited the same spectacle in very recent times, and is only now beginning to pass into the second stage, that of large capitals and cultivation on a large scale. And the same general features present themselves in the annals of our older North American provinces, south of the Potomac.

When Mr. Wakefield describes, in melancholy language, the early state of Virginia while unprovided with compulsory labour, and speaks of the casual arrival of a Dutch vessel laden with slaves in the Chesapeake, as the critical event which turned its retrograde career, and opened the way to improvement and abundance, he is drawing a striking illustration of his theory, but surely not narrating historical facts. In Sir W. Berkeley's description of that colony in 1671, when it was already carrying on a flourishing trade in tobacco, he estimates its population at 40,000, of whom only 2000 black slaves, 6000 "Christian servants for a short time." "Yearly," he says, "we suppose, there come in of servants about 1500, of whom most are English, few Scotch, and fewer Irish; and *not above two or three ships of negroes in seven years.*" This is the picture of a country in which the state of transition from the occupancy of small landowners, to that of proprietors of large estates cultivated by slaves, is only just beginning; when once begun it is certain to proceed with continually increasing rapidity, until the new condition of society is developed.

The usual course of events appears to be this: that it is not until the more fertile and best situated lands have been occupied, and to a certain extent exhausted, that the superior productiveness of capital in masses, and labour in combination, begins to be practically felt. The stimulus, too, afforded by an increasing market acts strongly in accelerating this inevitable change; and it is, at least, highly probable, that it may be still further accelerated by measures taken at the outset; by taking thought for the adjustment of the due proportion of capital and labour in the original foundation of the colony. Thus far, I think, the advocates of "systematic colonization" rest on very sure ground, and are entitled to the high credit of having been the first to draw

the attention of the community, at a very critical period, to this truth ; that it is of the highest importance to find some artificial substitute for the slave and convict labour, by which our colonies have hitherto been rendered productive. A truth which many are now ready to term self-evident, and to accuse the writers in question of having laboriously demonstrated principles which no one denies. All who are conversant with the history of human speculation know that this is the reproach invariably thrown on the authors of important discoveries, of which the very simplicity is, to ordinary minds, an argument to shew the want of originality of the inventors.

But with regard to the other theory of which I have spoken, namely, that an ample supply of labour tends to concentration of people, *that* seems still less applicable to colonies producing valuable agricultural commodities, than to the other class which we have just considered. The abundance of new and productive soil is the very first condition of the prosperity of such settlements. If they have not this, neither capital nor industry, nor multitude of people, will avert that inevitable decay into which they must fall from the competition of newer lands. What has been the cause of the decline of Barbadoes, Jamaica, and the smaller Antilles ? The limited extent of their available land. Why did Demerara, within these few years, produce more than half as much as Jamaica, with less than one-third of its number of labourers ? Not because population is concentrated, or capital accumulated, but because it possesses an extensive surface of alluvial soil, over which cultivation is constantly spreading, and of which, probably not one hundredth part has yet been brought under it. Now the scheme of the writers of whom I speak is really neither more nor less than to substitute an artificial limit in all

colonies for that limit which nature has assigned in our islands, — to make an island of a settlement in a wide continent. “The turning point of the system,” says the author of the pamphlet put forth by the Colonization Society in 1830, “is the necessity of fixing such a price “on land as shall prevent the abandonment of old for “new soil ;” that is, in other words, which shall prevent the colonist from making free use of that machine which nature has put within his reach. Surely Mr. Macculloch is right in saying, that “all this proceeds “on the exploded assumption that colonists are not, like “other individuals, the best judges of what is for their “own advantage.”\*

In what manner they have usually exercised that judgment, colonial history sufficiently shows. The growers of tobacco, rice, cotton, and sugar for the market have required a far greater extent of soil for their cultivation than the mere ordinary agriculturists of the northern settlements. So far from an ample supply of labour tending to concentrate population, it has, in North America, invariably gone along with the greatest possible dispersion. The early settlers in Virginia did indeed imagine the construction of such a society as the systematic colonizers have sometimes projected — an old society in a new country. For a short time it seems to have realised, in some degree, their imaginary model. The estates of the landed proprietors, congregated together along the banks of the numerous navigable rivers, each with its little hamlet peopled by indented servants or slaves, the rural aristocracy, the well endowed church establishment, seem to have presented for a few years, slavery alone apart, the resemblance of what has never been exhibited elsewhere in

\* Note to Adam Smith on “Colonial Policy,” p. 602.

the New World ; a little province of Old England, transplanted into the other hemisphere. But the progress of events was not to be thus checked. The land-owners found their estates become yearly less productive of tobacco, the most exhausting of crops ; they had no alternative between removal and a total change of system. Now, if they had not had abundant labour at their command, it is probable that their course would have been, to abandon their tobacco cultivation, remain on their estates, and sink into mere raisers of ordinary agricultural produce. But the possession of an ample supply of labour was the very cause which promoted their dispersion. They and their slaves migrated in quest of new soil ; they spread from the eastern to the western limits of the province, from the Atlantic coast to the mountains, and thence to the vallies of the Ohio and the Mississippi ; and at this day, the traveller finds, amidst the deserted "old fields" of Virginia and Maryland, the traces of that ephemeral state of society which I have described — aged mansions, resembling those of the country gentlemen of England, the dwellings of men whose habits and anticipations were widely different from those of the migratory American of the present time. While New England, almost unsupplied with dependent labourers from the beginning, has attained a density of population equalling 100 to the square mile, that of Virginia, which has been more amply furnished with slaves than any other part of the Union, does not exceed thirty. But it is not to be supposed that Virginia does not flourish ; she is no longer a great exporting province, newer soils having come successfully into competition with hers ; but the increasing opulence of the whole country reacts upon her, and she becomes rich by supplying the cotton-growing states with the articles of which they stand in

need. Can any one in his senses suppose that, if Mr. Wakefield's "belt of iron" had been put round the infant colony, — if the original settlers of Virginia had been forced to remain in their first clearings, and to expend their capital in maintaining them in a state of productiveness after their first fertility had disappeared, — Virginia herself, not to say the Union in general, would have been wealthier at the present day?

The conclusions, then, to which I would draw your attention, as deduced from the reasonings and facts laid before you in my present lecture, are these :

1. That an ample supply of labour is not only desirable, but essential, in a colony raising valuable articles of produce for the general market.

2. That in a colony not raising such produce in any abundance, it is unnecessary ; and that any attempt to ensure it, by controlling the freedom of action of the settlers, or preventing them from the easy acquisition of land, would occasion a dead loss.

3. That an artificial concentration of population, by restraining the abandonment of occupied lands, would seriously check the prosperity of most new colonies, and especially of such as raise valuable produce for exportation.

4. That, allowing that such concentration, if it took place from natural causes, might be desirable, the mere ensuring a sufficient supply of labour would not in any degree tend to promote it, but rather the contrary.

It will remain for us on a future occasion to consider, whether, in order to secure the advantage of a supply of labour, it may be sometimes worth while for a colony of the exporting class, to sacrifice some portion of its power of expansion ; as, for instance, by setting a high price on unoccupied lands, in order to expend the produce on immigration, according to the much-canvassed system now commonly styled the " South Australian."

The subject, however, must not be dismissed, without observing that much of the character and progress of a colony, in respect to the modes in which the three elements of land, capital, and labour combine themselves, depends upon extrinsic circumstances, which control and modify these general laws. The tendency of settlers to isolate themselves, and spread over the surface of the land, may be counteracted, in the first place, by the limited extent of the land itself; as in islands, or vallies surrounded by impracticable mountains, like those of the upper Andes; by the density of natural forests, rendering clearing more difficult; by the numbers and warlike character of the native population, as in parts of the Cape colony, where the boors are forced to congregate together for self-protection, and in the new French colony at Algiers. In Spanish America, wherever the population was collected in mountain plains, and especially where mining operations were carried on, large cities were early founded; Quito, Lima, Mexico, &c., were wealthy and flourishing when there was not a single town containing more than 20,000 people in British North America. A large government expenditure in a colony will produce a similar effect; as in New South Wales and Van Diemen's Land, where the population of the capital towns has always borne an unusually high proportion to that of the country. On the other hand, the causes which increase to its maximum the natural tendency to dispersion are, a wide extent of fertile soil, a wholesome climate, the absence of dense forests and other natural obstacles, and the want of navigable rivers, upon the banks of which men are usually inclined to establish themselves in communities. In colonies thus circumstanced, the inclination of men for the ease and independence of pastoral, semi-savage life, a propensity

which seems to overcome that of self interest, even in the most enterprising and industrious races, undoubtedly places great obstacles in the way of civilization. Such appears to be the state of the inhabitants of the Pampas of Buenos Ayres and the plains of New Mexico and California; and the danger of falling into a similar state is probably the greatest to which our Australian colonists are exposed. Whether the difference of their moral and intellectual condition, or the prospects of opulence to be derived from combined labour which may probably open upon them, will be sufficient to avert it, is matter of speculation; but it is undoubtedly difficult to conceive, that any government regulations, least of all those of a government established at the distance of half the earth's circumference, can effectually control their future career.



## APPENDIX TO LECTURE IX.

**DISPOSAL of Land in the Australian Colonies.\*** (From a Parliamentary Return of June 13, 1840.)

	Acres sold.	Acres granted.	Acres undisposed of.
New South Wales -	1,489,313	408,036	18,000,000
Van Dieman's Land	239,207	354,745	12,090,476
Western Australia -	22,327	723,692	Unascertained.
South Australia -	151,611	None.	Unascertained.

\* See Colonial Magazine, vol. iii. p. 453.

## LECTURE X.

EMPLOYMENT OF THE LABOUR OF SUBJUGATED NATIVE RACES.  
LEGISLATION OF THE SPANISH GOVERNMENT WITH RESPECT  
TO THE AMERICAN INDIANS, AND THEIR CONDITION. — ES-  
TABLISHMENTS OF THE JESUIT AND OTHER ROMAN CATHO-  
LIC MISSIONARIES.

I SHALL proceed to consider in order, in this part of my course, the different methods by which the requisite supply of labour has been procured in European colonies.

The expedient by means of which the earliest of modern European colonists made available for their service the rich territories they had subdued, was the labour of subjugated native races.

In various parts of their conquests, but more especially on the table lands of Mexico, Peru, and New Granada, or Cundinamarca, the Spaniards found the soil already cultivated by tribes advanced in civilization far beyond the ordinary condition of the natives of America. Into the curious problem of the origin and extent of that civilization it does not fall within my province to inquire. It has been exaggerated by some writers, but unduly depreciated by more. It is, at all events, clear, that they were so far advanced in industry and the mechanical arts as to be capable of developing to the utmost, under proper direction, the vast resources of their native regions.

But they were delivered over, in the defenceless state in which the conquest had left them, to the extremest tyranny which men, unrestrained by law or by religion

could exercise. The sovereigns, nobles, and wealthy classes were destroyed, and their property confiscated. The commonalty passed through various degrees of servitude, beginning at the lowest and worst, and gradually emerging into a more mitigated condition. At first they were treated simply as slaves, or rather as a portion of the stock on each estate; and the oldest grants of land in Hispaniola, it is said, mention the number of natives whom the proprietor was thus authorised to treat as cattle. Severe oppression, and particularly the laborious service of the mines, diminished their numbers to such a degree, that the interest of their masters in their preservation absolutely required the adoption of an amended system. The next scheme put in general practice appears to have been that of *repartimientos*, by which the Indians, divided into villages and families, were allotted to the owners of the land, who had a property in their labour, but not in their persons; thus they were adstricti glebæ, like the serfs of feudal countries, and incapable of acquiring property of their own.\* Finally, the custom of *encomiendas* superseded that of *repartimientos*; by which the Indian labourers were bound to render not services, but tribute, either to the crown, or to the encomendero or proprietor, to whom they had been thus granted or recommended; the crown or the proprietor being bound to render them protection in return for their tribute. In the towns, however, the Indian artizans

\* In the greatest financial distresses of Philip the Second, it was proposed in the Spanish council to sell these "Repartimientos." But the project was strenuously opposed by the king himself, partly through fear of the great proprietors aiming at independence, but more from consideration for the Indians, who would thus be removed from the protection of the state. In consequence of the king's opposition (an unusual circumstance in his council) the scheme fell to the ground. This should be remembered to his honour. — *Ranke, Fürsten und Völker von Sud-Europa*, i. 361.

appear to have early acquired a greater degree of liberty, to have worked on their own account, and in some, as for instance in Quito and Bogota, to have constituted the bulk of the labouring population.

These various systems all became altered and modified in practice, and out of them grew that heterogeneous state of legislation and custom which Humboldt describes in his *Essay on New Spain*. The superior privileges enjoyed by the Mexican Indians were owing, in part, to the liberal enactments of king Charles III.\*, who annulled the *encomiendas*, and forbade the *repartimientos*. In 1800, when Humboldt visited that country, the Indians of the rural districts seem to have been no longer under the obligation of legal compulsory service, either to the crown or to individuals. But they were treated by the law as perpetual minors. They were incapable of entering into valid contracts, to an amount exceeding ten shillings English. They dwelt together in villages, which they seem to have occupied on a system resembling that termed *Ryotwar* in India†; that is, cultivating the fields of the village in common, paying a gross amount of rent to the proprietor, and personal tribute to the crown. They were under the controul of the secular priests of their villages, who seem to have been maintained by the government as the most ready and effective instruments of police; and of *alcaldes* and *corregidores* of their own blood, who were often not the least severe of taskmasters. Though not legally attached to the soil, they seem to have been practically restricted from the free disposal of their labour. But while the peasantry were in this low condition, it appears that both the inhabitants of the towns and the labourers in the mines were

\* Humboldt, *Nouv. Espagne*, vol. i. chap. 6.

† Humboldt, *Nouv. Espagne*, vol. i. p. 421. 8vo edition.

not only free, but able to command high wages and indulge in a lavish expenditure. The remnant of the old Indian nobility was possessed, in some provinces, of considerable wealth ; and, through some evasion, doubtless, of the existing laws, the amassing of considerable fortunes, even by Indians of ordinary condition, was not altogether an uncommon event.

In Peru, the state of things was somewhat different. There, too, the Indians of the cities were free ; but those of the country were subject, until the revolution, to the burden of the mita, or conscription. The villages were compelled to furnish annually to the manufacturers, planters, and mine-owners of the neighbourhood a certain proportion of their labouring hands, at wages to be fixed by the crown. The time of service was also fixed, and the distance from their homes at which the Indians might be compelled to serve ; and all by regulations, which, if literally followed, do not certainly appear to have been very severe or burdensome.\*

What was the actual condition of the Indians under this legislation, and how did it affect their productive industry ? These are questions not easily answered by reference to such authorities as we possess, and there seems to have been a considerable discrepancy of opinion about them. There are, in point of fact, two very distinct sets of preconceived opinions with which they may be regarded ; two different points of view from which observers have contemplated them ; and in this manner the difference between the conclusions at which these observers have arrived may be partly accounted for. According to the feelings prevalent in the nations of western Europe, in which all classes (some few privileged bodies left out of the question) have long been

\* Ulloa, Voyage à l'Amerique Méridionale, Discours 18.

equal in the eye of the law, and enjoyed the same degree of personal freedom, the regulations to which the Indians were subjected were undoubtedly vexatious and tyrannical ; and the mere idea of retaining the bulk of the people out of the pale of citizenship, rendering them incapable of entering into legal engagements or assuming any honourable position in society, appears monstrous and unnatural. But it must be remembered, that, in the eyes of colonists, and it may be added of colonial governments, the normal state, if I may so express myself, of the subject Indian had always been regarded as one of servitude or quasi-servitude. Every advance from that state towards freedom, every step by which the native was liberated from any of his ancient burdens, was in this view a progress ; and many such steps of high importance had been taken by the Spanish government. If the Indians were *de jure* equal to the whites, which is the doctrine of modern philosophical politicians, then they were an oppressed race. But if they were *de jure* a subject class, which was an uncontroverted tenet, both in Europe and America, during the whole period in which the Spanish colonial legislation was framed, then their condition was highly advantageous, a little below freedom indeed, but far above slavery. If it was necessary to maintain the domination of the whites, to preserve the existing gradation of ranks, the existing distribution of property, it was, perhaps, impossible for the Spanish government to have placed the Indians in a state of full equality with their former masters. And if so, the condition of perpetual minority, which a fiction of law created, was not altogether an unwise invention. By placing the Indians under the direct protection of the law and its ministers, and by rendering it almost impossible for serious quarrel or opposition of interest to arise between them and the

wholly emancipated classes, it perhaps removed them from the reach of oppression, while it provided at the same time a security against revolution. Humboldt truly observes, that we should find the lot of the Mexican Indians less unhappy, if we compared it with that of the serfs of Courland or Russia, or of a great part of North Germany, at the time when he wrote.

With respect to productive industry, it cannot be supposed, that a system of legal incapacity, still less one of compulsory service, was well calculated to develop the energy of the labourer. Accordingly, we find, that in the manufactures carried on in the larger cities, and in the mines of Mexico, the most productive and the best managed Indian labour was free — experience having, no doubt, demonstrated, that it was more profitable than compulsory, wherever much exertion was required. But even where this was not the case, the Indians, when well treated, seem to have been industrious and tolerably effective labourers. Their indifference and listlessness were, indeed, remarkable; but these very qualities rendered them submissive under the tasks imposed upon them. Like most half-civilized people, they had peculiar aptitude for imitation, and little for invention, and the utmost patience in the execution of minute and trivial operations. The Indians, says Ulloa, “are in general remarkably slow, but “very persevering; and this has given rise to a proverb, when any thing of little value in itself requires “a great deal of time and patience, ‘That is only fit “to be done by an Indian.’” The enormous and almost unparalleled increase of wealth in some of the Spanish colonies, particularly Mexico, during the thirty or forty years previous to the revolution — wealth raised chiefly by the labour of Indians and of the mixed castes, negro slavery having been almost unknown, — seems conclu-

sively to prove, that the system under which that labour was regulated was neither inefficient nor oppressively arbitrary.

The chief abuses to which it was liable arose, not from the conception, but the execution of the laws. The Indians were purposely rendered defenceless, and placed entirely under the protection of appointed officers, both lay and ecclesiastical. Whenever, therefore, these guardians were themselves corrupt and oppressive, no security remained for them. According to Humboldt, the highest of these offices, — those of the Protectors of the Indians, were in his time so remarkably well filled, that, even in so corrupt a community as that of Mexico, not a suspicion of malversation was breathed against the holders of them. But if this were the case, their virtue certainly did not descend to their subordinate instruments. The memorial of the Bishop of Oaxaca, in favour of the Indians, which Humboldt has himself translated, exhibits but too vivid a picture of the ill-treatment which they had frequently to suffer from those to whom by the law was assigned the office of protecting, representing, and acting for them. And a more remarkable document has since appeared, the “Secret Notices” of Antonio de Ulloa. That writer, in his published works, had spoken with moderation, even with praise, of the general conduct of the Spanish authorities towards the Indians; he had even given it as his opinion, that the “Mita” of Peru was not injurious to them. But he addressed manuscript representations of a very different nature to the Court of Spain; and left behind him documents, which have found their way to the light almost a century after his visit to America, in which a series of frauds and oppressions committed towards these inoffensive people is said to be developed, sufficient to account for the



rebellion of Tupac Amaru in 1782, and for the part taken by the Indians in the more important movements of these later days.

Of the condition of the civilized Indians of Spanish America since the revolution I am unable to speak; nor is there, probably, any very definite notion to be acquired of the position which they occupy in the chaotic state of society which now prevails in those regions, where the most absolute principles of democratic equality seem to be strangely blended with customary fragments of the ancient servitude.\*

The policy adopted towards the natives in these ancient Spanish colonies furnishes, perhaps, no example of immediate application to ourselves, who have never been placed in similar circumstances; for no tribes approaching the Mexicans and Peruvians in industry or civilization have ever fallen under British sovereignty, in regions open to our settlers. Nevertheless, this brief sketch would hardly be complete without some notice of the extraordinary system of spiritual government under which both Spain and Portugal suffered the subjugated and Christianised Indians to be brought, in the vast frontier provinces of their American dominions. Although the modes employed by the super-

\* "It is remarkable that the Indian administration of one of the worst governments of Europe, and that in which the general principles of legislation are least understood, one, too, which has never been skilfully executed, should, upon the whole, have proved the least injurious to the happiness and prosperity of the native inhabitants of the country. This, undoubtedly, has been the character of the Spanish connection with the Philippines, with all its vices, follies, and illiberalities; and the present condition of those islands affords an unquestionable proof of the fact. Almost every other country of the Indian archipelago is, at this day, in point of wealth, power, and civilization, in a worse state than when the Europeans connected themselves with them three centuries back. The Philippines alone have improved in civilization, wealth and populousness." — *Crawford, Indian Archipelago*, ii. 447.

intendents of these missions to bring the natives into habits of subordination and regular government, might fall, perhaps, more properly under our consideration hereafter, when we have to enter more generally into the question of colonial policy towards aborigines, yet since some of the missionary bodies actually succeeded in converting whole tribes of wandering savages into flourishing agricultural communities, I should hardly have completed this part of my subject without noticing the means which led to this extraordinary result; to which nothing similar has occurred in the whole course of history.

The Missions of Spanish and Portuguese America were at one time of far greater extent and importance than is generally remembered. From all the points where the peopled provinces touched on the unsubdued forests or deserts of the interior, missionaries of the monastic orders, but more especially Jesuits, were constantly issuing into the neighbouring wilderness, spending their lives in obscure but unremitting labours among the savage multitudes which peopled it, and establishing a chain of settlements along the frontier. These settlements, termed Missions or Reductions, (from the *reduced* or converted Indians which they contained), were left to the internal government of the ecclesiastics, subject only the general controul of the governors of the adjoining provinces. They extended more particularly along the great water communications; the Amazons, the Orinoco, the tributaries of the Plata, in the forests at the eastern foot of the Andes, and to the extreme north of the Spanish possessions in California. Each establishment served the double purpose of a receptacle for the converted or reduced Indians of the vicinity, and of a factory or place of trade and communication with those as yet unsubdued. And

where a military outpost would probably have found itself involved in constant wars with its barbarous neighbours, the missionaries dwelt for the most part in a state of peace and confidence. Thus far, they were of essential, though subordinate, utility; but the only missions which ever attained to any great importance, and called the eyes of all Europe to the working of the singular principles developed in their institution, were those of the Jesuits, principally in Paraguay. The history of the Jesuits of that country, which deserves to be called a philosophical episode in that of the human race, has been the groundwork of much controversy, and of exaggeration, both by friends and enemies. Charlevoix's *History of Paraguay*, Ulloa's *Travels*, Azara's *Paraguay*, and many other works, may be consulted as original authorities on the subject; but it will be nowhere found so agreeably treated, or in some respects so fairly summed up, as in Southey's *History of Brazil*.

The great Jesuit republic, or rather republics, consisted of three different sets of Reductions, comprehended within the same Spanish government, namely, the lieutenancy of Buenos Ayres, but at a considerable distance from each other; those of the Guaranis, the Chiquitos, and the Moxos. The first of these were the most ancient and the most famous, and comprehended the most numerous population; they were situated, not within the limits of the modern republic of Paraguay, celebrated in our times as the seat of the singular despotism of Francia, but in a neighbouring district, now forming part of Brazil. The Guaranis were a very numerous people, whom the Jesuits found the means of reconciling to Christianity during the seventeenth century. Unwilling to lose the fruit of their labours, by the reckless violence of the Brazilian slave-

hunters on the one hand, or through the contaminating society of the Spanish colonists on the other, they obtained, by degrees, from the crown, the privilege of governing these Indians under laws of their own contrivance, arming them for their own defence, and excluding from the limits of their territory all strangers, sojourners, and even all visitors whatever, unless admitted for their own purposes.

The Guarani Reductions contained, at one time, from 100,000 to 150,000 souls. They were divided into missions, each of which held several thousand. The people of each mission were collected into a large village or town. In each there resided two ecclesiastics of the order; namely, one with the title of Curate; the other a sub-director, or assistant, to whom the details of the temporal management of the mission were entrusted; and no other white whatever. The Indians of each elected their own municipal officers, after the usage of all Spanish towns; but the nomination was subject to the approval of the curate, and, in point of fact, their authority was titular only; every function of power, from the highest to the lowest, was lodged in the hands of the spiritual governor. All the natives were armed, and officered by Indians of their own nation; being occasionally put under temporary training by Spaniards, under the especial superintendence of the priests. The houses of each town or village were exactly alike, and no distinction admitted in dress, or in the enjoyment of domestic comforts and luxuries. The only sumptuous building was the church; its adornment, and the pomp of divine worship, almost the only mode in which the surplus wealth of the community could be expended. The land of the village was divided into two portions; the field of the community, and the field of God. The latter was cultivated, by the labour of all, for the

purpose of raising articles which were exchanged by the Jesuits for such commodities as were wanted for the purposes of maintaining the splendour of their ritual, and supporting establishments for the sick and orphans, and for such other charitable ends as so simple a society could require. The other field was cultivated for the sustenance of the community, and for obtaining by exchange those manufactured articles which they did not themselves produce. How far each individual Indian was allowed to acquire property, either in the soil itself or in the fruits of it, is not very clearly ascertainable. Southey, following the common account, says, that a separate portion of the field, was allotted by the priest to each individual, as soon as he became of an age to labour, which at his death was again assigned to another. Ulloa, who is generally worthy of credit, says that there was a difference between the government of the Chiquito and Guarani Reductions in this respect ; that, in the former, each Indian enjoyed the fruit of his own field, but in the latter all the surplus produce of the soil was sold for the community by the Jesuits. The same omnipotent masters allotted to every man, at the commencement of the day, the tools with which he was to labour and the seed he was to use ; they superintended the public slaughter-houses, and delivered to each family the necessary meat (the common food of the country), and every other article of which they stood in need ; so that, notwithstanding what is said of the division of fields, it is difficult to understand in what sense, if in any, the idea of property could have been received among them.

It will be seen at once, how striking a resemblance this system bore to some of those which have been devised, and partly put in practice, in our own times, by the partizans of social equality. The principle, that

every man's labour belongs to the community ; that his right of property extends only to his aliquot part of the produce of the co-operating industry of all ; the regulated exchange, under fixed laws of value, between the produce of the day's labour of each separate artisan or labourer ; the exclusion of the use of money ; all these, whether asserted in theory or not, were actually practised by the Jesuit rulers of Paraguay, and that for more than a century, with uninterrupted success ; whereas no scheme of socialism, or Saint Simonianism, or any other of the philosophical dreams of modern times, has ever endured the test of above a few years' imperfect application. And the reason is obvious. While men are born with different tendencies and unequal powers, no means of maintaining equality among them can be found, except of a compulsory nature. Now, not a single one of the various systems to which I allude has ever contained, or, from its very nature, could contain, any provision for enforcing the observance of that equality on which they all insist. The Jesuits had the means at hand ; their subjects were bound to them by ties of absolute unqualified obedience, such as no government but that which controls the spirit of man can command. And it is, probably, no very adventurous philosophical speculation, to foretel that no scheme of social equality will ever develop itself among mankind, except under a hierarchy.

“ An Indian of the Reductions,” in the eloquent language of Southey, “ never knew, during his whole progress from the cradle to the grave, what it was to take thought for the morrow ; all his duties were comprised in obedience.” To establish such a system, in the outset, required great acuteness, great energy and perseverance. To maintain it, when once fairly established, the Indians having been thoroughly brought under the

spiritual yoke, and convinced of the infallibility of their masters, required little more than zeal and self-devotion, joined to habits of order, obedience, and regularity. For the Jesuit governor of the village was as completely a slave to the laws of his own community as any one of his Indian parishioners to the regulations which he imposed. The first care which he took of his subjects was devoted to their education. This, however, extended, for the most part, only to instruction in religion, so far as it might be orally given, and to the art of church singing; reading and writing were only taught to a few, who were intended to fill subordinate offices in the church. Marriage was then enjoined, as a duty, at the earliest possible period; so far were the Jesuits, as Southey has truly observed, from carrying their monastic sentiments into their civil government. The rest of the life of the Guarani was devoted to labour in the vocation which the priest at first allotted to him; relieved by military training, and by the observance of fast days, numerous processions, and strictly regulated public amusements. But unless men are compelled as slaves, the most absolute spiritual control will not force them to be industrious without an object. The Jesuits supplied that object; the one great end of industry which they held out to their simple converts was the honour of God, in the decoration of his church and his service. To this the ingenious man was encouraged to devote his skill, the strong man his strength, the singer his talent; in the pursuit of this alone, those natural inequalities of ability and temper, which even Jesuit discipline could not wholly eradicate, were turned to account.

Of the character of the spiritual instruction given to the Indians, by means of which this extraordinary docility was maintained, it would not become me in this place to speak. It is sufficient to observe, that although,

of course, deeply impregnated with what we deem the superstitions of the church of Rome, it was not by any means of so monastic a character as, from the position of their instructors, we might have been led to imagine. It was, perhaps, a peculiar and faulty characteristic of Jesuit discipline, that while the fathers kept almost all possibility of gross sin out of the reach of their converts by the most jealous measures, they encouraged a delicacy of conscience in trifles, a kind of spirit of casuistry in self-examination, which it seems remarkable that they could have instilled into the minds of such simple creatures. Thus we are told that the confession of an innocent Guarani lasted generally four or five times as long as that of the most profligate Spaniard ; and that the attending to this duty was, in fact, pretty nearly the hardest labour which a missionary, amidst all the multiplicity of his avocations, had to perform. But knowledge, except religious, was altogether excluded. "The object of the Jesuits\*," says Southey, with truth, "was not to advance their subjects in civilization, but "to tame them to the utmost possible docility." This they justified on the plea of a real inferiority in their mental capacity ; and, as the same writer observes, with much acuteness, the Jesuits were placed in a somewhat false position, by having to maintain two different theses, in each of which there was some degree of truth, against two different classes of antagonists. In opposition to the Portuguese slave-dealers and the Spanish encomenderos, who represented the Indians as brutes, to justify their own treatment of them, they had to contend that those poor creatures had souls to be saved and minds to be enlightened. Against the partizans of the civil government, who accused them of keeping the natives

\* History of Brazil, ii. 225.



in abject slavery for their own profit, they advanced the position, that the natural inferiority of the Indian intellect rendered them incapable, not only of self-government, but of any degree of free action, except to his own detriment.

With respect to the accusations of avarice and ambition to which I have here alluded, which contributed in no small degree to the eventual downfall of the society, these seem to have been utterly unfounded. The Jesuits never appear to have turned the labour of their numerous flock to the production of wealth for themselves, and no trace whatever has been discovered of the treasures which they were supposed to have amassed. And as such wealth must have been raised in exportable articles, and all the traffic of the Reductions with other parts was carried on under strict regulations by the Jesuits themselves, any such accumulation could not have been made without attracting notice. The ecclesiastics of the Reductions had salaries from the Spanish treasury: the Indians paid to the crown a small tribute, which, it was said, nearly balanced the expenses which the missions occasioned it, and no more. Of avarice they stand fully absolved; and in the absence of all substantial objects of ambition, to what does the charge of ambition reduce itself? The society was proud, no doubt, of its own wonderful republics, in which 50 of its members governed in peace and affluence 200,000 reclaimed savages: and the individuals employed on that most heavy and responsible service must often have felt their hearts uplifted at the thought of the great interests committed to their charge, of the important office which they were called to fulfil on the earth: and such an admixture of human nature as this can scarcely be said to dishonour the purest zeal. But the society derived no temporal power or wealth from

the expenditure of its best and noblest spirits in the obscure pursuits of the American missions. And, on the whole, whatever may have been the faults of their system, we shall hardly refuse to repeat the words of Southey, that "there never was a more absolute despotism : but there never existed any other society in which the welfare of the subjects, temporal and eternal, has been the sole object of the government : " even if we do not go so far as to say, with Raynal, that " perhaps never was so much good done to mankind with so little admixture of evil."

Two important practical lessons, I think, may be drawn from the history of the Spanish missions, and especially those of Paraguay.

The first is this : that history has no example to offer us of any successful attempt, however slight, to introduce civilization among savage tribes in colonies, or in their vicinity, except through the agency of religious missionaries. This is no question of a balance of advantages, no matter of comparison between opposite systems : I repeat, that no instance can be shown of the reclaiming of savages by any other influence than that of religion. This is a subject to which I shall have occasion to recur : I will merely, therefore, say, on the present occasion, that there are two obvious reasons why such should be the case : the first, that religion only can supply a motive to the governors, placed in obscure situations, and without the reach of responsibility, to act with zeal, perseverance, and charity : the other, that it alone can supply a motive to the governed to undergo that alteration of habits through which the reclaimed savage must pass, and to which the hope of mere temporal advantage will very rarely induce him to consent. Of this more hereafter : at present, I must confine myself to briefly showing how remarkably

the history of the South American missions confirms the position which may be stated in the words of Southey, "that the wealth and power of governments may be vainly employed in the endeavour to conciliate and reclaim brute man, if religious zeal and Christian charity, in the true import of the word, be wanting."

In the middle of the last century the Spaniards, by a blundering treaty, ceded to Portugal the territory comprising the Reductions of the Guaranis. The Jesuits bade their flock submit to the transfer; but the Indians themselves, finding that they were to be deprived of their spiritual masters, took up arms, and defended themselves for some time. At last the Portuguese government restored the Jesuits; but in a few years they were again and finally expelled, at the destruction of the order. Civil governors were then substituted for the spiritual, with similar powers, and retaining, as far as possible, the ancient regulations. But it was found at once that in these new hands the system was inoperative: it fell to pieces; the natural inequalities of society made way to the light through the fragments of the old artificial restrictions; some Indians, says Azara, became rich, many more were ruined: but the tendency to decay prevailed, the habits of savage life returned, and the traveller who visits the wild banks of the Paraná now finds only a few scattered remains of churches half buried in profuse vegetation, marking the site of the ruined towns of the Guaranis.

The same experiment was tried in Brazil, when the Portuguese Jesuits were expelled from their missions on the Amazons; and in that instance it is better worth attending to, because Pombal, who directed it, was a man of enlarged views, and a philosopher, after the fashion of his time; and his agent, Carvalho, seems to have been humane and well-intentioned. The history

of it will be found in the third volume of Southey's *Brazil*. Civilians were substituted for the Jesuit missionaries, with the title of Directors, and paid by a proportion (one sixth) of the specified compulsory labour of the Indians. That provision alone was sufficient to ruin the undertaking. The directors, having their own interest in the labour of the Indians, soon increased their daily tasks, until they perished or fled into the wilderness. La Condamine, no partial witness, describes the flourishing state of the Jesuit settlements when he descended the Amazons; twenty-five years afterwards their site was desolate.

But although missions have thus been the universal instruments for communicating the rudiments of civilization to savages, they have rarely succeeded for any long time in preserving them. Those of the Jesuits answered better in this respect than others, owing to the strong and Spartan constitution of that society itself; yet even the best of these seem to have contained in them the seeds of decay. In general, as Humboldt observed with respect to the missions which he saw on the Orinoco, "the feeble civilization introduced by the Spanish missionaries pursued a retrograde course." It is easy to assign a cause for this; the first missionaries who found a community of reclaimed savages are commonly men of greater energy and greater zeal than those who take charge of a society already framed: and their task is more inspiring and exciting. But the policy of the Spanish and Portuguese priests was invariably to keep their converts from doing any thing for themselves—to make them, in the language of Sismondi, great children, listening without understanding, and obeying without knowing why: everything, therefore, depended upon the personal character of the superintendents; and as these diminished in zeal and

intelligence, the societies necessarily fell to decay. Further proof of these positions may be found in the melancholy description of the state of the Spanish missions still subsisting under the Mexican government in California, in Mr. Forbes's recent work on that country.

The second lesson which I would draw from this most interesting narrative is, that no kindness of treatment, no vigilance of superintendence, no physical well-being and moral instruction will compensate to man for the loss of his individual liberty of action ; of that which he sometimes regards as a burden, but which is also a privilege, the right of taking care and forethought for himself. It may be thought, at first, that the history of the Paraguay missions rather affords examples to the contrary. Since, for several generations, men were retained together in communities, free from the corroding cares and the corrupting vices of civilization ; amply supplied (superstition apart) with religious instruction ; their heaviest fault, disobedience to their spiritual master ; their severest punishment, his displeasure, and the slight penance which he might enjoin for self-infliction : what more, it will be asked, remained to desire ? And in these days, when the very idea of freedom of action for the half-instructed man is connected in the eyes of many with those of license, self-will, and infidelity, I know not whether some may not be tempted to contrast the content and the quiet morality of this theocracy with the turbulent passions and vices which deform human society in every other shape. Were I to combat these views on ethical grounds alone, it would be difficult perhaps to meet, certainly to convince, the adversary ; because, were I to say, that the minds of men kept in this slavish condition are brutalized and degraded, we should probably not agree in the

definition of those words : apathy and contentment, ignorance and simplicity, obedience and servitude, are terms which often so nearly approximate in practical application, that an argument founded on the difference between them could scarcely be conducted to a satisfactory issue. But there is another and a very singular test of the success of the experiment of these religionists. It is this ; that in all the missions, the great Reductions of Paraguay among the rest, the number of inhabitants was constantly diminishing ; an irrefragable proof that there was something in the system inimical to the physical or mental development, or both, of the complex creature man. Writers have failed altogether to assign any general cause for this. They attribute it to a feebleness of constitution in the race ; but so unnatural a supposition is wholly unsupported by evidence, and seems to contradict itself, since their numbers are not said to have diminished before their reduction : to the small-pox and other epidemics ; but, in flourishing societies, epidemics have often swept off great masses of population, but have never produced regular and constant decay : to early marriages ; but the frequency of these, every statistician knows, tends to produce a contrary result.\* Yet the fact is undoubted.

The missionaries seem to have been little distressed by it. Enthusiasts in the cause, they regarded, as Charlevoix† says, every simple Indian who perished as an additional intercessor above for them and their labour of charity : but, in order to maintain their communities, they had recourse to the expedient of constant forays

\* " Now that fresh recruits can be procured with difficulty," says Mr. Forbes of the Californian missions, " and consequently " the stock maintained only by the procreation of those already " domesticated, it is probable that the whole race will gradually " diminish, and in a few generations become wholly extinct."

† Hist. du Paraguay, vol. ii.

among the neighbouring tribes, bringing home captives, and more particularly children, to serve as recruits to the Christian population. This was one of the worst features of the system. The Jesuits have told their own story as to these transactions, and they assert that they only used the means of persuasion and conciliation. But Humboldt, Forbes, and other writers, give fearful accounts of the cruelty with which this work of pretended piety was prosecuted in many missions, and the strange alliance between the practices of the African slave-hunter and the views of the missionary. What was the latent cause of this decay? What was the reason why people well fed, well cared for, entirely without spirituous liquors, inhabiting the climate to which they were accustomed, exempt for the most part from external hostility, not only did not multiply, but uniformly failed to keep up their numbers? Was it not want of liberty? Is it not the most probable solution of the phenomenon, that where the mental action is restrained altogether, the physical constitution likewise suffers: that men, in a state of complete servitude, like caged animals, will not multiply: that in the absence of all excitement and care, the faculties become torpid, the bodily strength sinks, and the man dies early of a premature and painless decay, like Southey's young savage in his Tale of Paraguay? while communities, composed of men thus circumstanced, waste away by that unseen destruction which Hesiod enumerates among the calamities inflicted on guilty nations:

ἀποφθινύθουσι δὲ λαοί·  
οὐδὲ γυναῖκες τίκτουσι· μινύθουσι δὲ οἴκοι,  
ζῆνος φραδμοσύνησιν Ὀλυμπίου.

Such are the consequences of contravening the laws of nature: of which it is assuredly one, that man shall

provide for himself by the sweat of his brow, whatever the suffering with which that condition of life may often be accompanied; and another, that man shall choose his own course of action, and distinguish for himself between the right and the wrong, however dangerous the liberty thus enjoyed, however beset with snares the path of self-guidance may be.

In a future lecture, I shall endeavour to point out the application of these principles to the conduct of our own colonial governments towards the aborigines of their respective territories: at present, I have merely introduced them by way of digression from my subject,—the various modes, namely, in which colonies have been, and may be, supplied with labour.



## LECTURE XI.

EMPLOYMENT OF SLAVE LABOUR. PRESENT CONDITION, AND PROSPECTS, OF NEGRO SLAVERY AND THE SLAVE TRADE. EFFECTS OF EMANCIPATION ON THE BRITISH COLONIES, AND REMEDIAL MEASURES NOW REQUIRED. FRENCH PROJECT OF EMANCIPATION.

THE diminution in the numbers of the native inhabitants of the Spanish colonies in America drove the conquerors, in little more than half a century after its first discovery, to resort to the importation of negro slaves to supply the deficiency. For three centuries, from that time to the present, every year has witnessed the arrival of fresh cargoes of these doomed children of servitude on the shores of the Western continent and its islands ; destined in part to replace the waste which excessive toil and unnatural restrictions continually make in their numbers, in part to accelerate the multiplication of the black and coloured races in that hemisphere, which seems likely either to balance or to outweigh the influence of the white and civilised race over great part of its surface. The difficult and intricate character of the questions involved in this fatal subject of slavery—the very wide extent of the interests embraced by it — the feeling of reluctance, and almost abhorrence, with which the mind approaches the mere economical consideration of matters so deeply interesting to every social and moral feeling of our nature,—all these render it extremely difficult for me to enter on it at all, and make it almost a bewildering endeavour to compress the treatment of it within the compass of a lecture. I must content myself with bringing its features very generally, I fear very indistinctly, before your view ; and what space we have

for more minute investigation must be devoted to what is of the most immediate interest at present to ourselves—the economical condition of those colonies in which slavery has been recently abrogated. Of the vastness of the subject before us, a few numerical estimates will perhaps assist us to form a conception. According to the best calculation I can make from recent statistical materials, the number of negro and coloured slaves, both in the colonies of European nations and under independent American governments, must amount to between six and seven millions; all inhabitants of America and its islands, with the exception of a few small settlements in the Indian ocean. Of these, perhaps, 3,500,000 are in the United States; 1,800,000 in Brazil; 500,000 in the Spanish colonies; 300,000 in those of France; 200,000 in those of other nations. It is more difficult to ascertain the numbers of free blacks, and free coloured people in whom the negro blood preponderates; they may, perhaps, amount in all to between three and four millions, including the Haytians, and the 800,000 who have been recently emancipated by Great Britain; nearly the whole of these belong to the labouring classes.

Lastly: to supply the waste occasioned by mortality, and to feed that increased demand for labour which an extending market produces, about 375,000 negroes, according to Sir Fowell Buxton's recent estimate, are yearly carried into slavery from Africa. If this number be not exaggerated (and Sir F. Buxton appears to have taken pains not to over-colour his statement), the trade has *quadrupled* since the time when Fox took in hand its suppression. Others estimate the number which actually reaches the shores of America at about 150,000.

Of this great multitude of labourers, enslaved and free, almost the whole are occupied, directly or indirectly, in

raising exportable produce, chiefly for the European market. Nearly all our sugar, and the greater part of our cotton, tobacco, and coffee, not to mention other and less important articles, are raised by negro labour; nine tenths of which is that of slaves. About one third of our export trade is now carried on to slave countries, and the products which we receive in exchange for the goods which we send there are raised by slaves.

I mention these circumstances, not only in order to excite that general interest which the magnitude of the subject may provoke, but in order to exhibit, in some degree, the extent of that moral responsibility under which we in England lie with reference to this wide-spread system; that responsibility, I mean, which still remains to us, after we have by solemn enactment renounced, for ourselves, the right of keeping our fellow-creatures in bondage. I am quite aware that many will look on that supposed responsibility as somewhat of a visionary character. Cases of conscience, it is truly said, must not be unnecessarily multiplied, or too subtly investigated. To say that every one who shares in the common physical benefits of civilization is answerable for his share of all the moral evil at the expense of which those benefits are produced, would be nearly equivalent to a sentence of banishment from the world. Still, in this particular instance, the distinction between direct and indirect participation in the gain arising from slavery and the slave trade does appear to me too minute to be substantial and honest. While we retained the system of slavery in our colonies, it was most justly said, that we could not lay the guilt of it, whatever that may be, to the account of our planters, while we were enriching ourselves at home by importing their produce in exchange for our own goods. In what way is the American government, or the cotton planter of Louisiana, or the cabinet of Spain, or the

tobacco grower of Cuba, precluded from making the same reply to us, when we taunt *them* with the miseries which their institutions engender? We speak of the blood-cemented fabric of the prosperity of New Orleans or the Havanna: let us look at home. What raised Liverpool and Manchester from provincial towns to gigantic cities? What maintains now their ever active industry and their rapid accumulation of wealth? The exchange of their produce with that raised by the American slaves; and their present opulence is as really owing to the toil and suffering of the negro, as if his hands had excavated their docks and fabricated their steam-engines. Every trader who carries on commerce with those countries, from the great house which lends its name and funds to support the credit of the American Bank, down to the Birmingham merchant who makes a shipment of shackles to Cuba or the coast of Africa, is in his own way an upholder of slavery: and I do not see how any consumer who drinks coffee or wears cotton can escape from the same sweeping charge. \*

If this be so, we cannot consider that we have exonerated ourselves by our own acts from all participation in the great offence, as some have termed it, of modern times. The abolition of the slave trade was indeed a great and noble action: it deserves to be called so, inasmuch as it was in truth that rarest of all achievements, a deed of national self-denial: by it we sacrificed (to a greater extent, it must be admitted, than we were then aware) the means of preserving and extending

\* Mr. Gladstone argues (*House of Commons, May 10.*), that the production of sugar is by far the most oppressive task of the negro, and that the consumption of other slave-grown articles is comparatively innocent. I fear this apology will hardly suffice for the use of cotton, if there is any truth in the received accounts of American slavery.

our colonial opulence. The recent emancipation was also a just and beneficent measure ; but I cannot attribute to it the same high character of self-denial as to the former, inasmuch as slavery without the slave trade, and in the then circumstances of our colonies, was rather a loss than a gain, and the prosperity of most of them, as I have shown on a former occasion, is now almost entirely factitious, and maintained only by a heavy tax on industry at home. And by that enfranchisement the natural course of events was, in all probability, only anticipated by a few years ; the slaves must have become free from the increasing burden on their masters of maintaining them, and slave labour is far dearer than free *wherever abundance of free labour can be procured*. But by these public atonements, our state may have discharged its duties, but we, the people, have not earned the right of calling ourselves saints, and the rest of the world sinners. We cannot rid ourselves so easily of our liabilities.

If, then, the encouragement of slavery were, in itself, and necessarily, that black and inexcusable crime which some represent it, I confess that my casuistry will not furnish me with any defence for those millions of individuals who aid in encouraging it by their commerce or their consumption. But if we look at that system more calmly — if we regard it as a great social evil indeed, but an evil differing in degree and quality, not in kind, from many other social evils which we are compelled to tolerate, such as the great inequality of fortunes which our institutions produce, or pauperism, or the overworking of children, or the state of the poorer classes of our manufacturing labourers, which no legislative interference can greatly ameliorate while our system of manufactures exists, we shall, perhaps, be more reconciled to take the world as it is, endeavouring

each in his own sphere to improve it ; we shall feel that there is a bond of connection, a more compulsive one than the mere common tie of humanity, between each of us and the meanest slave who toils in the cotton field or the boiling-house ; that we, who enjoy the fruits of his labour, are not free from the duty of protecting him ; that Great Britain, the great commercial metropolis of the world, is bound, above all communities (regard being had to prudence, and to that due respect which must be entertained for the independence of other states), to watch, as far as in her lies, over the interests of the negro race.

After the consideration which we gave in a former lecture to the subject of the scarcity of labour in the new or increasing colonies, it will be easily understood, that the great demand for slaves and the great profitableness of slavery, at the present day, arises altogether from that scarcity. Slave labour, it has almost passed into an axiom, is dearer than free ; that is, whenever the demand for labourers is abundantly supplied. When the pressure of population induces the freeman to offer his services, as he does in all old countries, for little more than the natural minimum of wages, those services are very certain to be more productive and less expensive than those of the bondsman, whose support is a charge to the master, and who has nothing to gain by his industry. This is true, without any exception for the effects of climate, which some have set up as a kind of justification or excuse for the enforcement of compulsory labour. Free Indians raised sugar in Mexico \* before the Revolution ; the labour of Portorico has been, up to a recent time, performed almost entirely by free whites and coloured men. In the burning atmosphere of the Malay islands, the free Chinese labourer exerts skill and

\* Humboldt, *Nouv. Espagne*, vol. iii. 177. 8vo. edit.

energies as far superior to those of the enslaved negro as the power of the English peasant is to that of the Russian serf.

This being the case, it is obvious that the limit of the profitable duration of slavery is attained whenever the population has become so dense that it is cheaper to employ the free labourer for hire. Towards this limit every community is approximating, however slowly. And although political institutions and old habits may prolong the existence, either of slavery or of villenage, to a much later period, as they did among the Greeks and Romans, and as they still do among the nations of the east of Europe, still, from that moment, the state of society becomes favourable to its abolition.

But it happens most unfortunately, in some respects, for the interests of society, that this favourable turn of events, as far as regards colonial slavery, is rendered almost incalculably distant by the extent of fertile unappropriated soil in or adjoining to the principal slave countries. As has been already remarked (and it is a truth to be particularly remembered in all discussions on this subject), neither skill, nor capital, nor abundance of labour have ever been found able to compete, in tropical cultivation, with the advantage of a new and fertile soil. Notwithstanding all the improvements in agriculture, which experience or accumulated knowledge can bring about, it has always been found, that whenever a new district has been opened to adventurers, it inevitably attracted the capital, and eclipsed the prosperity, of the older ones. In a former lecture, I had occasion to show you how completely this fact is borne out by the history of the West Indies : how Jamaica, after its first occupation by the English, after the expulsion of the Spaniards, undersold and outstripped the older Antilles ; how *St. Domingo* rose for a time, while Jamaica remained nearly

stationary ; and how, in these later times, even the indolence of the Spaniard and Portuguese has been overcome by the temptations of an extending market and a rising price ; and Cuba and Portorico are rising in wealth with unexampled rapidity, while our own colonies and those of France either decline or advance almost imperceptibly. So long, then, as there is new soil to break up, so long the continuance of slavery is secured ; because workmen must be had at all hazards, and it is more profitable to cultivate a fresh soil by the dear labour of slaves\*, than an exhausted one by the cheap labour of freemen. It is secured, I mean, as far as the immediate interest of the masters can prevail in maintaining it.

For example : the limit of the ill-gotten prosperity of Cuba will, of course, be found in the exhaustion of the fresh and fertile soil in that island. How near that limit may be, it is impossible to conjecture. We have seen that the old sugar plantations in the neighbourhood of the Havanna are already abandoned : but that clearing is continually extending in the interior. About three millions of acres in Cuba are said to be in cultivation ; that is, a sixth of the surface of the island. But if that limit had been reached, no perceptible advance towards the abolition of slavery would be gained. The southern part of the New World still offers its vast and almost untouched continent to the speculations of avarice. Brazil, the second, if not the first, slave state

\* The profits of slave cultivation, with an abundant supply of hands and a fresh soil, seem to be enormous for a few years. The net produce of a plantation in St. Domingo paid the purchase-money in six years.—*Say, Traité*, ii. 301. The same writer estimates that a negro slave, in the French Antilles, cost per annum 300 francs in maintenance, 200 as interest of purchase-money ; while the wages of the free labourer amounted to 1800. Adam Smith considered that the rum and molasses on a West India estate, in his time, paid the rent, and all the rest was net profit. These statements are rendered credible by the evidence of the present prosperity of Cuba.



in the world, has soil available for every kind of tropical produce beyond all practical limit : and if unchecked by any other than economical causes, there seems no reason why the slave trade and slave cultivation should not extend with the extending market of Europe, until the forest has been cleared, and the soil exhausted of its first fertility, from the Atlantic to the Andes.

North America affords a still more remarkable instance of this general truth. I entered, in a former lecture, into some details of the economical history of Virginia, as an example of the natural course of things in regions of limited fertility, raising exportable produce by compulsory labour. You will have perceived from that statement, how slavery, from having afforded a high rate of remuneration to the planter, becomes at last a burden ; the profit of his cultivation falling off along with the gradual diminution of fertility, while the expense of maintaining his slaves remains the same or increases. Therefore, if the Allegany Mountains had offered as formidable a barrier to the migration of slaves and slave owners as the sea which washes our island colonies, it is very easy to perceive that, in the older slave states of America, all economical reason for the maintainance of slavery would by this time have ceased ; its continuance, if it continued at all, would have been owing only to habit or to fear, and free labour would by degrees have been superseding compulsory. But, unfortunately, a new source of profit opened to the Virginian slave-holder. Whether from better institutions, or from a healthier climate, the negro race multiplies in slavery in America, while it declines or remains stationary in the West Indian Islands. While, therefore, capital is migrating farther and farther westward, and new lands are daily taken up as the old ones are abandoned, slaves are bred in the older states, and *supplied*, by a regular domestic slave trade, to the new.

This tide of population has already overflowed the boundaries of the States. Texas is now the land of promise of the slave-holder ; its savannahs are beginning to swarm with wealth and industry, and the price of slaves in its sea-ports is said to be three or four times as high as at the Havanna.\*

It seems, therefore, but too evident that no economical cause can be assigned on which we may rely for the extinction of slavery, and that those who have persuaded themselves that nations will gradually attain a conviction that its maintenance is unfavourable to their interests are under a delusion. What political reasons may operate against its continuance in those societies in which it prevails, it is not within my province to inquire. It is certain that in most slave-holding communities, in which the population contains any intermediate class between slaves and masters, that class has an interest in its abolition ; although prejudices sometimes interfere to prevent its being clearly perceived by them. The Spanish islands, for instance, contain a free white and mixed population of many hundred thousand, who themselves live by labour ; these find themselves opposed by the slave in the market for their own commodity ; and even if they belong to a class somewhat higher than this, that of the small land-owners, they share very little in the prosperity of the sugar planter, while they are familiar with all the social evils which that dearly purchased prosperity engenders. It is thought by recent observers that this class is pretty generally opposed to Spanish connection, to the

\* There are, however, very different accounts as to Texas. According to an article in the Colonial Magazine for January, 1841, it contains, as yet, only 5000 slaves out of 300,000 inhabitants, and the people are adverse to the importation of more. The author of the paper on Texas, in the Edinburgh Review (April, 1841), states the number at from 6000 to 10,000.

slave trade, and to slavery itself; and that these are chiefly maintained by the influence of the richer landed proprietors, aided by the colonial government : and the example of the freedom granted in our own islands, and shortly to be announced in those of France, may operate more powerfully and generally than we can anticipate. It is, however, but too plain that little reliance is to be placed on such uncertain speculations ; and the prospects of this question, it must be confessed, have at no former period been so generally dark and discouraging.

Such, I repeat, are its present prospects. Nevertheless, there are measures of internal policy, entirely unconnected with any irritating and unjust interference in the affairs of other nations, by which I cannot but believe that it is in our power at once to develop our own latent resources, and to deal a heavy blow to the abominable system which thrives to our cost and to the disgrace of humanity. The attempt to cut off the supply of slaves by repressing the trade, appears almost as impracticable as it would be to compel the enfranchisement of those now in captivity. After all the fruitless expenditure of treasure and negotiation which has gone on for the last thirty years, even those zealous partizans who have all along urged our government to its continuance, beaten by the force of circumstances, now come forward to aver that not a single step has been gained towards the accomplishment of the object ; that the foreign slave trade has quadrupled under our benevolent endeavours to check it ; that force is of no avail, and that its employment must be abandoned. I refer to the recent work of Sir Fowell Buxton, which is as important, as a manifesto of the present sentiments of leading abolitionists on the subject, as it is, unfortunately, unsuccessful in pointing out a substitute for the present system ; the best resource which the inge-

nuity of the writer can point out being the chimerical speculation of civilising Africa, by establishing a legitimate commerce with her inhabitants, through the force of government bounties. I would not speak in any other than respectful language of the promoters of a scheme in which some of the best and most philanthropic minds of the day take so warm an interest ; but, surely, among the thousands who welcomed its announcement with enthusiastic applause, few indeed could have reflected on the utter disproportion between the means and the object, even were there any reasonable probability of those means being carried into execution.

Let us leave the consideration of these visionary plans of cutting off the present supply of labour, and reflect on the other means which may exist of meeting the demand for it. I have already said, that while some of our sugar colonies are full of people and poor of soil, others are suffering under the most distressing want of labourers, and abounding in land, which scarcely any conceivable extension of supply could exhaust.

The necessary consequence of this state of things, during the interval between the abolition of the slave trade and the abolition of slavery, was that the value of the slave labourer in the market differed to an extraordinary extent in our several colonies. As slaves could not be imported from one into another, there was no mode of equalizing it. Each settlement was restricted by law to the employment of its own native labourers. However great the demand for additional hands which a fertile soil and an accumulation of capital might produce, they were not to be procured except through the natural movement of the population ; that is, not at all, for the negro population did not increase. This truth is remarkably proved by the official returns of the money value of slaves in the several colonies at the period of

emancipation, which are subjoined in the appendix to this lecture. The price of a field labourer, of the class there called *prædial attached*, which comprised the great majority of the negro peasantry, was assessed by the compensation commissioners in Demerara at 169*l.* which is a continental colony, with a highly productive soil, and a great scarcity of population in proportion to it ; in Trinidad, the least populous of the islands, at 110*l.* ; while in Barbadoes it only reached 75*l.*, in Dominica 70*l.*, and in Jamaica 67*l.*

This statement of figures will indicate to us the different state of circumstances in which the several classes of colonies had to undergo the process of emancipation, and the different manner in which they were affected by it. It will also point out to us the different character of the measures to be adopted, if any measure should be deemed advisable, in the present crisis of their respective fates.

It will be found, I think, that the British slave colonies, at the time of emancipation, might be divided into three classes, as respects their economical situation :—

First, the oldest of our settlements, established in the smaller Antilles. Some of these had been, for many years previous to this great event, in a very depressed state ; but others, comparatively speaking, were in a flourishing condition. They were those in which the land was nearly all occupied, population extremely thick, cultivation ancient, and capital accumulated. Such was Barbadoes, the most densely peopled spot of the western hemisphere, perhaps of the world ; such was Antigua ; possibly, also, St. Vincent's, Dominica, and one or two more. In these, population and production had been nearly stationary for a long series of years ; the cost of production was generally great, and profits moderate. They had not been injured by the abolition

of the slave trade, for they were always fully supplied with labour. They were less injured than any others by the immediate effect of emancipation; for the negroes had no resource except in continuing to work; there was no unoccupied land for them to possess, no independent mode of obtaining a subsistence to which they could resort, still less of obtaining those luxuries which habit had rendered desirable to them. There appears to have been in most of these really no serious interruption at all, either in production or the ordinary course of social life; and those appear to have fared the best of all, in which the masters were wise enough to perceive their own position, and to feel that, as the force of circumstances must drive the enfranchised negro to depend on them for wages, to retain them in any degree of servile control, was only to postpone the period of satisfactory adjustment. In the little island of Antigua, densely peopled by 35,000 inhabitants, of whom 29,000 were slaves, the masters voluntarily rejected the proposed apprenticeship, and allowed their slaves to pass at once from servitude to perfect liberty.\* The result of this bold experiment has been, that, far from having suffered by emancipation, property is said to have greatly increased in value; the negroes are all employed, and apparently in perfect content, at very moderate wages, by no means exceeding the former cost of maintaining them.†

It would, perhaps, be rash to conjecture that, in colonies such as these, the cultivation of sugar might still be maintained on an extensive scale without protecting duties; but it is certain that they are in the best con-

\* See De Tocqueville's Report on the French Project of Emancipation, p. 39.

† Allowance must be made for the years 1836 and 1837, in which, I believe, the seasons were very unfavourable in Antigua.

dition for that skilful application of combined labour and capital which alone can make head with any success against the advantage of superior fertility. And it is equally certain, that the continuance of slavery must have been highly detrimental to them ; for the expense of maintaining it, in densely peopled countries, is perpetually on the increase. Their chief complaint at the present day is of the emigration of their emancipated labourers to colonies in which wages are higher. They will find, like other countries from which emigration takes place, that it is no loss in the end.

2. The next class is that of colonies in which the fertile or advantageously situated soil was all cultivated, and becoming exhausted ; but there remained much unoccupied soil, of a less valuable description, and the population was not dense in proportion to the whole surface. This is the case with some of the smaller Antilles, but most conspicuously with our most important tropical colony, Jamaica. For many years the state of that island has been extremely unsatisfactory, beautiful and rich as it undoubtedly is. In my former lectures I have traced the course of its fortunes ; and have shown by numerical statements the gradual decline of its prosperity. Its population has remained nearly stationary since 1800 : its production of sugar had diminished from about 100,000 hogsheads at the peace, to little more than 60,000 *before* emancipation ; and of other articles in proportion. About two thirds of its surface are under cultivation. The best soils for the raising of sugar appear to be very limited in extent, and have been wrought for more than a century. But there is a great breadth of land, both cleared and uncleared, available for the raising of provisions and other articles, sufficient to supply the necessary wants of the negro

labourer. The colonists, therefore, suffered, during the continuance of negro slavery, by the unprofitable nature of their cultivation. They were injured, *perhaps*, by the abolition of the slave trade; and they suffer now, since emancipation, by the difficulty of compelling the negroes to perform hired labour while they have their own provision grounds, and other resources, at their disposal. It is difficult to ascertain the real amount of the injury which the measure has inflicted upon them, amidst the conflicting exaggerations of both parties. The language of many of the colonial party is despairing. "We have now arrived at that stage of prosperity," says a writer in the Colonial Gazette\*, "when it will require the whole produce of five parishes to make up the quantity which one, before, has not unfrequently made. The state of the Blue Mountain Valley was such as to bring to my recollection the prophecy of the Bible as regards Jerusalem." Estates, which in 1825 produced 2900 hogsheads, he adds, produce, in 1840, 280. On the other hand, Mr. Gurney, the great advocate of the negro cause†, seems to view everything in Jamaica in the brightest possible colours: wealth and comfort everywhere increasing, and property rapidly rising in value. His estimate makes the diminution of the export of sugar in 1839, the first year of absolute freedom, scarcely 4 per cent.‡ Some of his statements are startling: but it is impossible to refuse credence to the body of evidence which he adduces of the superior amount of labour performed by the negro freeman to the negro slave, wherever he is on

\* No. lxxvii.

† Winter in the West Indies, 1840.

‡ Export of sugar, year to Sept. 30. 1838, 53,825 hogsheads.  
1839, 45,329.

But the hogshead increased, in the latter year, from 17 to 20 per cent. in size. (p. 171.)



good terms with his employer.\* Where this is not the case, Mr. Gurney seems to attribute, without scruple, the disagreement entirely to one cause — an attempt on the part of the master to retain his ancient slave under his influence, by charging the rent of his cottage to the account of his wages. It would be absurd to pronounce with confidence in the midst of such opposite testimony. But, on the whole, we cannot avoid perceiving, in the first place, that political and social causes have rendered the working of the great experiment in Jamaica difficult; but that, in the second place, even should that difficulty prove only temporary, the economical evils under which the colony suffers have a deeper root. Nothing maintains cultivation on the large scale, at the present high rate of wages, except the high price of sugar; if that cannot be maintained, it is difficult to see in what manner the colony will weather the storm. But it is equally evident that the dangers which have beset it have an origin long anterior to emancipation; and that nothing can give a favourable turn to its destinies except some new developement of energy which freedom may per-adventure exhibit, and which under servitude would have been impossible.

3. The destiny of these two classes of colonies, however, it is not in the hands of government to control, nor has our legislation as to slavery materially affected it. Let us turn to those of another class, in some of which the fertility of the cultivated soil is as yet unex-

\* "In the laborious occupation of holing, the emancipated negro performs double the work of a slave in a day." p. 114. "Stone walls are built, new houses erected, pastures cleared, ditches dug, meadows drained, roads made and macadamised, villages formed." p. 178. "The negro will perform, by the day, about three fourths of a labourer's work in Norfolk; by the piece he will beat him." p. 179.

hausted, in others there is abundance of fertile and unoccupied land. Such are the Mauritius and Trinidad, and, in a far higher degree, Guiana. The last is one of the most productive countries on the face of the globe. A vast alluvial level extends from the foot of a chain of low interior mountains, along the banks of three large rivers, and along the sea-coast. This soil is rich to an excess of luxuriance, and a most insignificant portion of it only has been brought as yet into cultivation. Between 1814 and 1825, the exports of Guiana increased from about 600,000*l.* to 859,000*l.*; the negro population in the same period diminished from 102,000 to 92,000. Since that period, except in some remarkable years \*, its production has been stationary or retrograde: its slave population has continued to diminish, and amounted to 86,000 only at the period of emancipation. Now here it is impossible not to perceive that the abolition of the slave trade has very seriously checked the economical progress of the province. The existing labourers have been worked to excess — their diminution unhappily proves it — more were not to be procured. Guiana had abundance of land, and the means of attracting abundance of capital; but the third great requisite, labour, was wanting. With the slave trade, and with British enterprise, Guiana would at this day have exceeded Cuba in prosperity. It is with no feeling of regret that I state this truth; but in order that the evil and its remedy may be clearly before our eyes.

Upon those colonies the effect of emancipation seems to have been partially unfavourable, though the returns

\* In 1836, Guiana raised 1,077,000 cwt. (or 54,000 tons) of sugar. In that year its 86,000 negroes actually raised more sugar than the 320,000 of Jamaica, if the account from which I quote is correct (Colonial Magazine, January, 1841). But this was partly owing to the comparative abandonment of other colonial staples, such as coffee and cotton.

are as yet uncertain and unsatisfactory. The negroes have found it easy to obtain a subsistence in a country overflowing with natural wealth: they have been rescued from a servitude involving, perhaps, a greater amount of labour than in any other settlements: they have abundance of land to resort to for their maintenance. The accounts, both from Guiana and Trinidad, seem to report the negroes as generally peaceful and well-inclined, but indisposed to labour, to which they can only be tempted by the most exorbitant offers of wages. An able-bodied and willing negro is a prize, which the owners of neighbouring estates intrigue against and countermine each other to obtain, with all the artifices of rival diplomatists. The production of sugar and its associated articles seems to have fallen off in the first year of emancipation about one fourth in Guiana, and the same in Trinidad. But these results, it is plain, are comparatively unimportant: with or without the emancipation, the same general consequence must have followed: the wealth of Trinidad and Guiana must either have remained stationary or declined, through absolute want of the necessary labour.

Now for the evils under which these colonies suffer, both those of immediate and of more recent origin, we have the remedy in our hands. A supply of labour is the one thing needful, to enable them to resume or maintain their superiority in the production of tropical wealth. Could the supply only be equalled to the demand, much more than this might be done; they might be enabled to compete successfully with the foreigner, even if the protection now given to British colonial produce were withdrawn. Could the planter of Guiana only obtain hands to work at moderate wages, what would he have to fear from the rivalry of the Cuban or the Brazilian? His soil is fully as fertile

as theirs, his climate as propitious, his situation for commerce as favourable ; while he has all the advantage of British capital and British enterprise on his side. The immigration of free labourers could produce no benefit in the smaller Antilles, which are overpeopled already ; its advantage would be very doubtful in Jamaica, where the people are sufficient for the work to be done, and the present disinclination to labour, and high rate of wages, may perhaps arise from temporary causes only ; for Demerara and Trinidad it is the one great requisite, the *sine quâ non* of their future prosperity. Its immediate effects would be to bring down the enormous rate of wages by fair competition : its ultimate effects would be to extend production indefinitely, and convert the precarious condition of those settlements into one of unexampled prosperity.

What then are the reasons which prevent the immediate attention of our legislature from being given to this, by far the most important exigency of our colonial administration at the present day ? It is really with sorrow that one who is impressed with the deep importance of this crisis is compelled to advert to the class of objections which have hitherto been urged against the adoption of decisive measures by some of those who have been most influential in furthering the cause of negro emancipation. One favourite bugbear is, the fear of introducing a new system of slavery under the guise of regulations for the newly imported free labourers ; surely a most chimerical fear, when the eyes of government and of the public are so jealously fixed on the subject as they now are, and when our suspicions are so easily awakened by the slightest suspicion of encroachment on the rights of the labourer. The danger of injustice to the employer is, just at present, the greatest of the two. Another is still more difficult

to define and to contend with — it is the fear lest the importation of free labourers should interfere with the satisfactory adjustment of differences between the employer and their former slaves — with what is called the working out of the great problem of emancipation ; in other words, lest the competition thus produced should force the labourer to be content with lower wages than he can now obtain. I cannot but think, that any one who has impartially examined the present condition of these islands will see that, sooner or later, this result, the lowering of wages, must arrive ; the only choice is between the ruin of the capitalist and the labouring class together, and the proper adjustment of the relations between labour and capital. The present rate of wages is maintained only by the unnaturally enhanced price of sugar. The moment that this gives way, if a reasonably cheap supply of labour be not introduced, the whole social system will give way along with it.

But, argue some reasoners, is it necessary for the welfare of the West Indies and the happiness of the negroes that the vast surplus produce which they now export should continue to be raised ? We did not emancipate our slaves in order that these island factories might continue to flourish ; but in order to procure a free, moral, and contented population. Let the great plantations go to decay, if it must be so ; the loss will be abundantly compensated by the establishment of numerous small occupiers, each maintaining himself by the produce of his own industry ; and the gangs of slaves who in former days assembled under the lash of the taskmasters, will be exchanged for an independent yeomanry, if I may use the expression, of the coloured race. There cannot, I fear, be a greater delusion than this. The great danger of emancipation, which all its reasonable friends have foreseen, and against which they

have been most anxious to guard, has been lest the half-civilized freedmen should sink into the indolence and apathy so natural to their climate and condition; content themselves with an easily acquired subsistence, and relapse by degrees into the savage state. Now, the immediate effect of freedom has been just the reverse,—to stimulate their love of luxury and display. Their expenditure has been greatly increased. The high rate of wages has enabled them to maintain it; and the consumption thus excited, has given for the time an air of activity to all those branches of commerce which contributed to supply this consumption. But unless the profuse expenditure of capital among them, in the form of wages, be continued—that is, in other words, unless the production of staple articles of export be maintained—all these acquired tastes will die away, from the utter impossibility of gratifying them. Each negro will be able to support himself in tolerable comfort; but, without the aid of capital, he cannot produce surplus wealth; without it, therefore, he must remain a stranger both to the wants and the refinements of civilization. The example of Hayti is before our eyes. There the gradual relapse from comparative civilization to barbarism, of which I have spoken, actually took place during the first twenty or thirty years after the recovery of liberty. At first, the negro community retained much of the wealth and industry of the old colony; but the wars consequent on the French invasion destroyed its remaining capital; and the people sank into that condition which some philanthropists appear to desire for our West Indian fellow subjects—that of small occupiers, vegetating in barbarous indolence on their prolific soil. The cultivation of sugar disappeared; the production of molasses, the less finished article, increased; that of coffee diminished, but has of late years again

increased, though not to such a height as it had attained before the revolution; mahogany, dyewood, and other products of rude and unorganised labour, altogether neglected in the flourishing days of the colony, were shipped in increasing quantities from the ports of the island. In short, to use the language of an observer, "every branch of cultivation requiring steady systematic labour fell into decay, while all that called for occasional exertion, and might be resumed at intervals, rather increased;"\* and the people, in spite of severe laws for the enforcement of labour, fell into a state of easy indolence from which they have never since been able to raise themselves.

Emigration of labourers being recognized as the great want of these colonies, the next question is, from whence these labourers are to be obtained. For this is a matter in which undoubtedly government must interfere, and not leave it to be wholly settled by the voluntary proceedings of individuals. Emigrants of the lower orders are among those classes of subjects to whom all governments owe the exercise of a sort of protective authority.

Emigration from Europe, I fear, cannot be encouraged. After all the precautions which humanity and prudence can suggest, the climate presents an almost insuperable obstacle to the prosperity of a white labouring population. It is true, that the Spanish race have become naturalized in Cuba and Portorico, as well as on some parts of the burning shores of the Spanish Main; but

\* Evidence before the Lords' Committee on Hayti. "I believe," says one witness, "that Hayti is the only country where chairs are placed for the sentinel on duty: this was introduced in Pétion's time, and may be considered as a fair sample of the system."

Coffee exported from Hayti, —

1789 (before the Revolution)	77,000,000 lbs.
1826	32,000,000
1840	43,000,000

(Committee on Imports.)

this naturalization has been the work of time, only accomplished in several generations, and at great cost of life in the commencement, while we stand in need of immediate results. Often as the venture has been tried, no body of European labourers, transported to this beautiful but treacherous climate, has ever thriven. The lamentable account of the latest experiment of this sort in Trinidad, published in the last report of the Land and Emigration Board, is sufficient to discourage the warmest advocate for this species of colonization.\*

I will not carry you into the controversies which have been raised respecting the importation of other classes of free labourers from Asia and Africa, Chinese, Indian Coolies, and native Africans. We shall not, probably, feel tempted to share in the apprehensions so generally expressed, lest these ignorant people should be reduced to slavery under another name; or dread the remote evils which some profess to apprehend from a mixture of races in the population of the colonies. Diversity of races is an evil only when the law has recognised a difference of privileges; where the white is taught from

\* See the statements of Colonel Mein and Sir H. M'Leod, p. 144., &c. About 800 emigrants arrived in that island last year from France and Germany: they died at the rate of ten per cent. in the first four months. There is a project now on foot for colonizing the high lands of Jamaica with British labourers; it being imagined that the negroes will gradually abandon the labour of coffee cultivation, carried on in those parts of the island, and withdraw to the plains, where the climate is said to be more congenial to their constitution. But in a country of such a limited extent, it would be impossible to confine the whites to their mountain tract, even supposing it to be as healthy for Europeans as is suggested; and mere occasional visits to the plains are often as pernicious as a prolonged sojourn there. In the next place, white labourers, even in the comparatively moderate climate of the hills, are almost sure to contract habits of intemperance. And lastly, a comparison of the mortality of the troops in the several stations in Jamaica will show, that relative height alone is no sure protection from disease. Without joining in the violent opposition which some have shown towards this project, I cannot expect great success for it.



infancy to regard himself as superior to the negro or the Indian, the Englishman to the Irishman, the British colonist to the Canadian *habitant*. Let all be placed on a footing of equality — let intermixture be encouraged, instead of being reprobated — and prejudices of race will soon cease to exist. What, but this happy equality, has amalgamated into one entire body politic the strangely heterogeneous races, from which the Englishman of modern days traces his pedigree? It may be doubted, nevertheless, whether experiments of this description are likely to prove successful in many instances. The inferior intellectual acquirements, and low social condition of some of these races, seem to render them unfit for transplantation as *freemen*.

Another, but a limited source of supply, will be from the heretofore slave population of the thickly peopled Antilles. This cannot, of course, be prevented, if it were desirable to do so; as freemen, the negroes have a right to carry their labour where they will; but there can be little doubt that it will prove beneficial to both the colonies they leave and those in which they settle.

But no quarter which has hitherto been suggested appears to promise so favourably for this purpose as the United States of America. The southern and middle states are said to be peopled by great numbers of free coloured people, of inferior condition, whom their laws degrade, and who under the system of slavery can find only a precarious employment. The white Americans themselves are said to be so jealous of the numbers of this dangerous class, that emigration from thence would meet with every encouragement at home. They are of the same kindred with the West Indian negro, and their importation would obviate that mixture of races which some profess to deprecate. They are far superior in intelligence, and said to be fully equal in strength,

to the natives of Africa. They are certainly better adapted to the climate than Europeans, and probably than any race of Asiatics; and whatever the danger of the oppression of free emigrants by their employers may really be, it is evident that it would be far more easily guarded against in the case of American negroes than any others. They would not readily suffer themselves to be placed in a worse condition than their brethren, the natives of the island; it would be impossible to prevent the knowledge of their condition from reaching their kinsfolk in America; they would therefore be protected, both by their own greater means of self-defence and by the interests of the planters, from such injustice as might, by the supposition, be practised on other classes of labourers.

The only remaining question, and an important one, is, from whence the funds for the encouragement of this species of emigration are to be derived. The insulated efforts of the planters are evidently inadequate to the object. It is a matter which government must, sooner or later, take in hand, unless it means quietly to submit to the ruin of these noble possessions. If the waste land of the colonies can be made available for this purpose—that is, if purchasers can be found—this is evidently a case for the adoption of the so-called South Australian system, which we shall hereafter discuss; and all the funds thus raised should be scrupulously devoted to the great purpose of obtaining labour. Nor is the prospect of raising such a fund altogether so hopeless as some may imagine. In Guiana, where fertile land is very abundant, it is customary for the planters to abandon the sites of their old plantations when the return begins to diminish. The sea-coast is fringed with ancient sugar estates, now abandoned, or converted to other purposes. Hence, a

steady, though not very considerable, demand for new land. Thus, for instance, a number of proprietors in Berbice have lately put in a claim for what are there called "second depths;" that is, blocks of land, unoccupied, and contiguous to their plantations, to which they have, by the usage of the colony, a right of pre-emption. Governor Light\* estimates that 22,500*l.* may be raised, by acceding to their request, at the moderate price of 1*l.* per acre. But these resources cannot be deemed sufficient to meet so great an exigency; and if our nation is not willing to make some temporary sacrifice for the furtherance of this object, we have only ourselves to blame if the critical moment pass irrecoverably by, and the best chance be lost, not only of restoring the prosperity of our sugar colonies, but of beating down by honest rivalry the enormous opulence of the foreign slave-owners, and applying the most efficacious counteraction to the progress of slavery itself.

There is still another instrument which England has in her possession, which may be powerfully used in her war against slavery, but the use of which is not, I fear, equally acceptable to our planters. I mean the employment of free labour in the wide and fertile regions of the East. The British East Indies already supply us with 500,000 cwt. of sugar per annum, or nearly one sixth of the quantity furnished by the West Indies. After long opposition to so equitable a measure, the duties on this sugar have been lowered to an equality with those on West Indian, and there is every reason to expect that its production will greatly increase. The equalization of the duties on other kinds of produce is now contended for. But our islands and maritime settlements in the Indian

\* Return of Land and Emigration Board, 1840, p. 109.

Archipelago, particularly Ceylon, might probably raise sugar in much greater abundance, and on cheaper terms, than the main land of Hindostan. China is at hand, to supply labourers to almost any amount, and the best of labourers,—active, persevering, and intelligent. In the eventual course of things, and as the artificial fabric which European governments have so long toiled to construct gradually gives way, under external shocks and internal decay, it is difficult to imagine that the tropical East, with its ancient civilization and its abundance of labour, will not compete successfully with the West, laden as it is with the curse of negro slavery.

It remains for me to notice very briefly the various plans for the emancipation of slaves which have engaged the attention of statesmen. The fears which were at one time so widely entertained, and almost prevented all calm discussion of the question, of bloodshed and confusion as the immediate consequences of their liberation, may now be regarded as obsolete; so complete, in that respect, has been the success of the British measure. It has been tried in countries in which the proportion of slaves to freemen was higher than in any other part of the world. It has been brought about without a single day of disturbance, without a single shot fired in anger. The question which now remains to be solved is, in what manner this great change can be effected with the least loss of the negro's labour, and with the fairest prospects for his civilization.

Three different modes of accomplishing this object naturally present themselves to the mind; namely, immediate and general emancipation; emancipation of individuals, one by one, as the reward of good conduct; and general but graduated emancipation; the latter to take place, as has been most generally suggested, by continuing the system of compulsory labour, but taking the

slave out of the control of the master, and placing him under that of the law. The apparent advantages of the two latter plans are so great — they recommend themselves so readily to the natural fears which men entertain of any sudden and violent change — that there is no wonder that they have generally obtained the suffrages of speculative writers and statesmen. The author of the “European Settlements in America” entertained, nearly a century ago, the idea of placing enfranchised slaves in a sort of villein condition, dependent on the government.\* “What, if in our colonies we should go so far as to find out some medium between liberty and absolute slavery, in which we might place all mulattos after a certain limited servitude to the owner of the mother; and such blacks whom, being born in the islands, their masters, for their good services, should think proper in some degree to enfranchise? They might have land allotted them; or, where that could not be spared, some sort of fixed employment, from either of which they should be obliged to pay a certain moderate rent to the public. Whatever they should acquire above this, to be the reward of their industry.” And similar views have been expressed by most of those who have since speculated on the subject: namely, that enfranchisement should be the reward of good conduct, and that the slaves should be conducted, one by one, from the state of servitude to that of liberty.

Nevertheless, there are serious objections, although not at first sight so obvious as its advantages, to any scheme of individual enfranchisement. They are strikingly brought forward by M. Tocqueville, in his Report already cited. The most important of them,

\* Vol. ii. p. 13.

and that on which alone I shall at present dwell, is that by making liberty a condition of good conduct a stigma is inevitably cast upon labour. All know how completely toil is a badge of degradation in slave colonies. One of the principal objects of their institutions should be the destruction of this most injurious prejudice. The plan to which I have alluded must necessarily foster it. The enfranchised negro feels his own superiority to his comrade chiefly in his freedom from compulsory labour. Thus enfranchised negroes in slave communities prove, in general, an idle and a dissolute part of the population. Any scheme by which they should be called one by one to freedom would probably only augment the ranks of the useless, at the expence of the useful, portion of the community.

This error our government avoided, by placing the negro population simultaneously in a state of apprenticeship. Thus, we adopted the second of those plans which were just now enumerated — namely, universal but gradual emancipation. But, in doing this, we committed what some have considered two capital mistakes.

The first of these was the fixing a definite term for the apprenticeship. It is difficult to conceive how it could have been imagined, that with certain freedom before them at the end of six years, the negroes were to hug their remaining chains during the whole of that period, and apply themselves quietly to heavy and continuous labour. And, on the other hand, the masters, having nothing to gain and nothing to lose by their conduct towards their apprentices, and certain of being deprived of all power over them at the end of the stipulated time, were too often tempted to make the most of their brief authority, and to employ the arm of the law, wherever they could influence those who

wielded it, to wreak upon these dependents that vengeance which they could no longer personally exercise.

The next and more important error was, that our plan of emancipation, as M. Tocqueville too truly observed, seemed to have been framed with a view to the interests of colonial wealth alone, and to secure as little interruption of labour as possible. For this purpose, the negro was simply converted from the slave of the master into his apprentice, instead of the relations which bound the one to the other being entirely broken asunder, and subordination to a new authority introduced. The master could no longer sell his slave; he could no longer punish him, but was forced to recur to justice for that purpose; but the apprentice was, as before, his compelled labourer, only the compulsion was administered from another quarter.

Under these restrictions, the period of apprenticeship, in almost all our colonies, was one of mutual discontent, suspicion, and aversion; the worst of all possible preparations for that condition of absolute freedom which was to follow.

The former of these steps, even M. Tocqueville, I am surprised to find, does not propose to avoid. He recommends to his government a plan of apprenticeship for a definite period, similar in this respect to the British measure. But in some of its features it differs essentially from our own. The apprentices are to be transferred at once from the power of the masters to the control of the state. All property in their labour is to cease. They are to remain under the tutelage of government until the period of their full emancipation; and government is to assign their services, on such terms as it may judge expedient, to those who require them.\*

\* Rapport, p. 50.

External circumstances seem to promise favourably for the success of this experiment. The principal French colonies, Martinique, Guadeloupe, and the Isle Bourbon, are much in the condition of our own smaller islands ; that is, their available soil is almost all cultivated, and the cost of production is high, which renders slavery unprofitable ; while, on the other hand, the slave can with difficulty find resources for subsistence except by his hired labour. They have also one inestimable advantage over ourselves, on which, being purely moral, it is scarcely within my province to touch ; complete unanimity between the government and the ministers of religion, on whom so important a part of the task of civilization devolves. How far our own colonies have been from enjoying it, is unfortunately too notorious ; that the miserable neglect of the negroes by our national church, during the last century, threw their instruction almost entirely into the hands of a class of ministers, whose merits towards them have doubtless been great, but between whom and the landowners and colonial authorities perpetual opposition has existed. It is wisely proposed by the French government to accompany, or rather to anticipate, its proposed enfranchisement by a large addition to the number of ministers of religion in the colonies, and by considerable institutions for negro education.

Still, the eventual result of their endeavours, as well as of our own, is yet in the womb of time. The keenest eye is baffled in the attempt to penetrate the clouds which overshadow that province of futurity ; the acutest judgement can hardly attain to any clear view, even of the immediate prospect, amidst the mis-statements and recriminations of conflicting witnesses. It would seem as if the spirit of partizanship must distort, not the intellect only but the very senses, when we compare the



recent accounts which we have received of the state of the enfranchised commonalty in our West Indian possessions.

Read the descriptions of the friends of emancipation ; they admit nothing of doubt or uncertainty, they speak not even of partial success ; they pronounce the result of the grand experiment to be triumphant, — the state of the new commonwealth happier than any which the world has ever known. A free, orderly, industrious, moral, religious people ; abundance of work, wages reasonably high ; a new taste for luxuries and refinements hitherto undreamt of ; man raised in his own estimation, and by that increased self-respect converted at once from a savage into a civilized and virtuous citizen ; a general passion for education, a zealous attachment to religion ; labour performed with all the willing strength of freemen, and consequently twice as productive as the listless efforts of slaves ; commerce, wealth, increasing with gigantic strides ; these are all the phenomena which strike their imaginations. If their attention is recalled for one moment to the fact that, in the middle of all their prosperity, the production of staple articles of export is still annually diminishing, it is but treated as a temporary and trivial mischief — the consequence of the natural clinging of the masters to the shadow of their abolished tyranny — a slight cloud which is already vanishing under the beams of that new and glorious day which has dawned on the negro race.

Turn to the statement of another class of observers, and all is gloom — difficulty and discontent in the foreground of the picture, ruin in the distance. The breach between the capitalists and the working class is complete and irremediable. It is absolutely impossible to count on the steady labour even of the best disposed among the negroes ; a fit of idleness or caprice, or the desire

of procuring unreasonable and unattainable wages, will induce them to abandon the fields at the most critical period, and leave the ripe crop to rot in the ground. Production is diminishing year by year in the larger colonies, estates are falling into decay; a less breadth of soil is annually devoted to the raising of exportable articles; in fine, all betokens the approaching abandonment of these ill-fated regions by the white races, with their knowledge, enterprise, and accumulated capital, and the rapid degeneracy of the negroes, on the soil which they will have conquered from its owners, into a condition of abject and apathetic barbarism.

It is impossible for the candid inquirer, at a distance from the scene of action, to satisfy himself of the real truth amidst accounts so strangely contradictory. Thus much we cannot fail to perceive, and with unmixed satisfaction: that the moral condition of the negro mind, in most respects, is higher than the best friends of the African race could have ventured to pronounce it, before it was tested by the dangerous acquisition of freedom: that the subjects of our experiment have passed through the ordeal of enfranchisement most triumphantly, as far as order and good conduct are concerned. There is scarcely a population in the world with so little of civil crime. The eagerness for the marriage tie, and the happiness of domestic life among those to whom ancient tyranny had nearly denied both—the sincere and earnest desire for the blessings of education, blessings which it is difficult to understand how beings emerging out of a state of compulsory ignorance could have been found to appreciate—the love of comfort, the show of self-respect in externals, which prevails among them—all these are most gratifying testimonies to the innate powers and excellencies of the race, as they are also to the eternal, but much

neglected truth, that freedom in man is the soul of virtue as well as energy. But the display of these qualities does not solve the great question of the future. The present flourishing condition of the negro peasantry cannot continue without steady industry. We are not now discussing the abstract question, whether civilization may not flourish in the absence of wealth — suffice it to say, that in the present state of the West Indies, the growth of wealth alone can ensure the growth of civilization. Their taste for comforts and luxuries, and the great increase in the importation of articles consumed by them, on which so much stress is laid by writers on the prosperous side of the question, prove that they are able just at present to obtain very high wages for very slight and irregular labour — the worst of all preparations for an orderly and industrious state of life. When those wages fall, as fall they inevitably will, and that shortly — what will be their conduct *then*? Will they be content to work more steadily for less remuneration? or will they prefer to continue in their present desultory habits, and drop, one by one, their acquired wants, rather than undergo the additional fatigue which will then be necessary to satisfy them? This is not only the great question of the day in reference to the actual condition of our tropical colonies, but it is perhaps the most important of all the questions which now agitate the political world, in its ultimate bearing on the destinies of the human race. If all our sacrifices, all our efforts, end but in the establishment of a number of commonwealths, such as Hayti now is, flourishing, in contented obscurity, side by side with the portentous and brilliant opulence of slave-owning and slave-trading states — the best interests of humanity will have received a shock which it may take centuries to repair. If, on the other hand, we do but succeed

in bringing about a state in which wealth shall continue to grow, and civilization to spread, however slow their progress at first may be,—if the seed can but germinate at all,—then the ultimate destruction of slavery, and the redemption of the children of Ham from their age of captivity, may be contemplated as within the range of speculation. Fortunes, such as never hung suspended on the issue of battle or revolution, are involved in the peaceful crisis which is even now in operation. Are we prepared to meet it? Have we seriously thought of its importance? Much must be left to the control of a higher Power; but something we ourselves can effect; and if I have at all succeeded in pointing out the way in which a copious immigration may operate in stimulating the negroes in our larger colonies to labour, and in lowering the cost of production of colonial articles, it must follow that no measure has more urgent claims on public attention, if we would not remain resigned and apathetic spectators of the threatened catastrophe.

## APPENDIX TO LECTURE XI.

## No. I.

PRICE OF SLAVES of the Class called "Prædial attached," in the undermentioned Colonies, from the Returns made for the purpose of assessing Compensation under the Emancipation Act.

				£	s.	d.
Honduras	-	-	-	190	19	3*
Guiana	-	-	-	169	10	4
Trinidad	-	-	-	110	2	11
Grenada	-	-	-	100	0	0
St. Vincent	-	-	-	97	6	9
Antigua	-	-	-	94	8	11
Mauritius	-	-	-	93	15	4
Montserrat	-	-	-	90	0	0
St. Lucia	-	-	-	80	0	0
Barbadoes	-	-	-	75	0	0
Dominica	-	-	-	70	0	0
Jamaica	-	-	-	67	1	8
St. Kitt's	-	-	-	59	15	9
Nevis	-	-	-	57	0	0
Tobago	-	-	-	55	0	0
Virgin Islands	-	-	-	55	0	0
Bermuda	-	-	-	51	18	0
Bahamas	-	-	-	35	10	0

\* I have not seen any statement which accounts for the extraordinary value of slaves in Honduras.

## No. II.

PRODUCTION in Trinidad and Guiana, before and since complete Emancipation.

TRINIDAD (periods of seven months).

	Sugar.	Cocoa.	Coffee.
	hhds.	lbs.	lbs.
1835	20,532	1,688,038	74,305
1836	22,570	2,339,119	169,429
1839	16,330	1,987,733	198,112
1840	15,016	2,255,467	292,255

Colonial Magazine, ii. p. 375.

## BRITISH GUIANA.

	Sugar.	Rum.	Cotton.	Coffee.
	lbs.	gals.	lbs.	lbs.
1835	107,586,405	3,740,867	867,942	3,066,742
1838	77,052,737	2,239,256	470,460	1,590,539
1839	47,522,000	1,440,000	303,900	747,450

Moorson's Present Condition of the West Indies, 1841.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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